HENRIETTA BELLMANN:

OR,

THE NEW FAMILY PICTURE.

A NOVEL.

BY

AUGUSTUS LA FONTAINE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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HENRIETTA BELLMANN.

CHAPTER I.

FIRST SCENE.—A CONVERSATION.

"GOD grant that you may pass many happy years in this habitation," said the pastor Bellmann to the Collector! "to be sure had you followed my advice it might have been better; for according to Aristotle, *to consider only our own advantage in what we undertake is not the conduct of a virtuous man!*"

"I do not know if you enter precisely into the sense of this philosopher's maxim," said the Collector, "nor do I believe it can possibly be applied to my habitation.

For my part," continued he, "I care but little how the windows look on the outside, if it is but light within;" then stepping into one of the apartments, "see," said he, "dear Pastor, how chearful, and light it is; no twilight at noon-day for me!"

"And who, for heaven's sake," said the Collector's brother, a disbanded Lieutenant who spoke but seldom, "who can be of a different opinion?"

The Collector, instead of answering, laid his hand upon his shoulder, a sign which, between the brothers, was, by a contract, equivalent to *yes*. "But now, let me shew you the parlour I was speaking of," cried the Collector; when opening the door, they entered it together. The Lieutenant stood still resting on his stick: he surveyed the apartment attentively, shook his head, smiled wistfully, then sighed, and eagerly seizing the Collector's hand: "Brother," said the Lieutenant, "may Heaven reward you! my

whole

whole pension would I have given for a room furnished as this is; but I never could have guessed how to set about it." His voice, unusually firm, faultered as he spoke, and his eyes filled with tears.

"See, brother," rejoined the Collector, catching the contagion of the Lieutenant's emotion, "here is the bit of tapestry with the little summer-house, and the Chinese and his parasol upon it, just as it was in the time of our worthy parents."

"The house is too new, brother," said the Lieutenant.

"It will grow older. There stood our father's easy chair," continued the Collector. "How many happy moments did he pass in it, brother! even the happiest moment of all, that in which he left the world for ever! His pallid face reposed against its back, while he looked at each of us alternately—tried to smile—raised his hand to bless us—and the breath which had animated the best of men, was extinguished for ever!"

The Lieutenant rose hastily from his seat—involuntarily laid his hand on the easy chair, and then on his heart—"No more, dear brother!" said he, in a low voice.

"Our sister," resumed the Collector, "stood behind him; and do you not remember when he wanted to go to sleep, how she supported his head with her hands?"

"Brother, brother, no more!"

The Collector now drew the Lieutenant to the window. "Do you recollect," said he, "the day on which you left us, when we wrote our names, and traced the figure of a heart around them, with my mother's diamond ring, upon a pane of glass? Do you not remember it? Surely no sacrilegious hand can have destroyed this monument of brotherly affection! Time perhaps——but our hearts still exist, and I have preserved my mother's ring!" He drew it from his finger, and traced a second time their names on

the

the glass. The Lieutenant was much affected: tears rolled down his cheeks.

"Since fate, my brother, has, in our old age, again united us, let us suffer our hearts to overflow in tears of joy and tenderness."

"All this is very ridiculous," said the Pastor, who had attentively regarded the whole scene.

The Collector was evidently pained by this remark: he soon, however, resumed: "I will now," said he "shew you the rest of the house." The Lieutenant turned aside to the window, making a sign to his brother, that he wished to remain alone.

When they had gone over the house, and returned to the room in which they had left the Lieutenant, they found him seated in the easy chair, pressing his lips to the place which had supported his father's head. He rose with some confusion from his seat, and returning to the window, placed himself in front of the pane on which his brother had written their names.

 "Well,"

"Well," said the Pastor, "I can only repeat what I said to you before. God grant that you, your wife, and the Lieutenant your brother, may pass many happy days in this habitation. This is all the benefit you are likely to derive from it. The town, most assuredly, will not allow you a single farthing for having thus rebuilt the residence of the tax-gatherer; and a year hence, should any misfortune happen to you, you would be deprived of it, and would see it inhabited by a stranger. What would you then have gained by the expence and trouble you have incurred?"

"A great deal, certainly. But a few minutes ago you remarked, that to consider only our own advantage in what we undertake, is not the conduct of a virtuous man—a maxim that can be no where better applied than in the present case: every happy moment enjoyed by my successor in this house, I shall share with him. Will this be nothing?"

The Collector was here interrupted by

his

his brother, "Frederic," ſaid he, "you must read us after the desert, the speech you made when you took possession of your office."

"Oh, by all means," cried the Collector's wife, "nothing can be more apropos!"

The Collector begged to be excused; but the Pastor, who piqued himself on his eloquence, and was eager to shew himself off to advantage, persisted till he obtained a promise that it should be read. During the dinner he pronounced high eulogiums on public discourses, and explained, with great prolixity, their most proper subjects.

"My discourse," said the Collector, "is, to say the truth, nothing like what you describe." He fetched some sheets of paper; the Pastor stretched himself at his ease, that he might hear at leisure. The Lieutenant filled his glass, and retired to the window, where he took a seat, with his back turned to the company.

The Collector then read aloud: "It was at first my intention, my honourable coadjutors, and friends, when I was inducted into this office, to have read to you a learned treatise in which, according to the custom of the literary world, I should have set out with a discourse on architecture, for the sake of saying something, in the sequel, of my own house. I should have cited the habitations of the Troglodytes, the ark of Noah, the tower of Babel, the temple of Solomon, the palace of Semiramis, and all the renowned edifices of antient and modern history. I had even taken down the titles of more than a hundred volumes, which I considered as a mine, out of which I should have extracted all my erudition. To be brief, I might possibly have produced a most learned dissertation, if I had not reflected what a pitiful figure my cottage would have made, brought upon the canvas along with the palace of Semiramis, or the church of St. Peter; and, if my vanity had not been humbled

bled by the recollection of the caverns of the Troglodytes, and the conviction that our habitations at best are but gaudy and commodious tombs. In my discourse I compared the system of the sciences to the timber-work of my house; philosophy to the tower of Babel, where the workmen could not understand each other; theology, to a house without a foundation; medicine to the architecture of the Troglodytes, who labour under ground, concealed from human eyes. I had even filled two sheets of my work, and carried on my comparisons without interruption, when I happened to hear the following dialogue between a mechanic and his man, who were at work in the adjoining chamber:"

"This is a fine house," said the master, "and well lighted."

"True," replied the man, "especially compared with that which will be the last abode of him who built it."

"But, at least, in that," rejoined the master, "a man is at rest."

"I threw down my pen: the few words I had heard furnished an ample field for reflection.—Yes, it is but too true, said I to myself, that our projects and desires, when we consider what our last great coat (as the Abbé Voisenon used to call his coffin) infallibly must be, are much too vast and eager. But should we for this be content, like monks, to dwell in cells, contemplate only death's heads, and recite nothing but *memènto moris?* The Creator adorns the tomb of man with flowers, and his very coffin exhibits the colour that is the symbol of hope. Why then should not I adorn and beautify my house? In the same proportion that my last abode shall be tranquil, solemn, and confined, should this I now inhabit be spacious, gay, and busy. All the persons I love best shall live with me beneath its roof, or at least, assemble often there, for the purposes of joy and friendship. Yes, joy shall consecrate these walls; peace shall be our inmate; the gentlest slumbers shall refresh our senses;

and

and never shall the tear of despair fall on our unsullied boards. I then paused: 'Merciful God!' exclaimed I, raising my hands to heaven, after a moment of recollection, 'how vain a being is man when he depends on a constant series of prosperity! This house may exist for a hundred years! How many different persons may in that interval be its inhabitants!—every room may witness the tears of misfortune, and every bed be the receptacle of a corporeal sufferer! It will, perhaps, belong to some wretched martyr to the gout, and its walls will echo no other sounds for forty years, than his cries. At this moment I see before me, the father of a family on his death-bed; his wife, with his children at her side, contemplating in the silence of despair, the wasted figure of her expiring husband! But, gracious God! it cannot be, that no sounds but those of grief shall here be heard! no; happiness shall have its turn with sorrow, in my dwelling. Should

I at some time or other experience the rigours of fate, I would say with a smile—this I have merited.—But my wife! my brother! oh God! their sufferings I could not support!"

The Lieutenant was overwhelmed; he moved a folding door backward and forwards, and raised his eyes to heaven.

"Should fate pursue either of these with misfortune," continued the Collector, "where should I find consolation? Ah! had I but a child! he, ignorant of sorrow, would smile and sport around us; or, were he more advanced in age, would, with his hopes or projects, rejoice our anxious hearts. Alas! alas! why is my brother childless?"

CHAP.

CHAPTER II.

THE HERO OF THE TALE.

THE Lieutenant interrupted the Collector with emotion. "Brother, I have a child!" All eyes were instantly turned upon him: he blushed under the conviction, that an error would be imputed to him. Willing to justify himself, he said, "I am not the father of this child; it was given to me by the sentence of a civil court; I may say indeed, that, before God, I consider myself to be his father."

The Pastor smiled a little maliciously. The Collector, holding out his hand to his brother, said with a serious air, "Brother, I understand you.—*Before God!*—I know what that would express. If, however, the child was mine as much as I believe it to be yours, I should sleep very tranquilly this night."

"This child has cost me many a sleepless night," said the Lieutenant shaking his

his head; "but if you and my sister are willing, the child may be brought here."

The Collector looked at his wife: she smiled; and then said, "we will consider of that."

The Pastor requested to hear the conclusion of the Collector's speech. The Collector, still keeping his eye fixed on his brother, said he had lost the connection of the story.

"We will have it another time," said the Lieutenant.

The Pastor then rose and took his leave of the Collector. As soon as he was gone, the Collector again placed himself at table; and his wife, giving him a significant look, left the brothers together.

After long silence, "It appears to me," said the Collector, "that you have some scruples, brother, to relate this story. Do not put any constraint upon yourself.'

"I am considering where I shall begin.

You

You will find it extraordinary. It is an affair that might have terminated to my honour, had I thought proper to conduct it otherwise than I did."

"Then you were not desirous that it should turn to your honour?"

"My feelings did not permit me to take that course. If this child had not existed, I should have returned to you a married man. I was in a passage boat, on the Elbe, proceeding to Dresden. The boatman had taken in too many passengers; and, among others, was a very beautiful young lady, with her parents, who were persons of good circumstances in Dresden. I sat opposite to the young lady: her observations on the surrounding scenes, and on various topics of a general conversation, were so much in my way of thinking, that I began to consider her with more attention. I was extremely moved; an invisible power tempted me to throw myself at her feet, and say, 'you are mistress of my destiny.' I resisted the inclination,

nation, although the tumult of my mind increased every moment. Suddenly a violent gale sprung up. The boat was loaded to the water's edge, and the waves of the river rose in a very alarming manner: even the boatmen trembled at the danger. I saw how great it was; for I had often been on the Elbe in a like storm. It was impossible to gain the high banks of the river, and we drove at the will of the waves. The wind increased, and the terror of the passengers added to our danger. At length I perceived a small boat anchored among the rocks. You know how well I can swim. I sprang into the river; and, in a word, brought the small-boat, and placing four of the passengers in it, namely, the young lady, her parents, and another person, I conducted them to the shore, and successively returned till all the passengers were safely landed. A carriage was procured at the nearest town, where we passed the night in a [illegible]rry inn. The persons whom I had thus saved, folded me

me in their arms. The young lady too was of the number; but I dared not permit my lips to touch hers.

"The next morning, we departed for Dresden, where I was soon on an intimate footing with the young lady's family; and she appeared always to receive me with pleasure. At length, nothing remained wanting to our union, but the consent of our parents. My happiness could not be surpassed. All the misfortunes of my life were effaced from my memory."

At these words the Lieutenant rose, and traversed the room with hasty strides: he then continued his story with more composure.

"The young lady had a lover who, I may justly say, was of a base disposition. He resolved to disgrace me with my mistress. In the house where I lodged, was a pretty servant girl, to whom, however, I had never paid any manner of attention. She was seduced, and proved to be with child. I had frequently seen my rival visit this girl; but

but no suspicion arose in my mind. One day I was cited before the magistrates; the girl declared that I was the father of the child. This gave me the more inquietude, because I felt how much it would affect my intended wife; but I thought it would not be difficult to prove my innocence. The witnesses produced against me declared, that they had often seen the young girl quitting my chamber early in the morning. That might be true; for you know how early I rise. The magistrates replied with a sarcastic smile to every protestation of my innocence. They even advised me apart to settle this affair by the influence of a little money. Unfortunately, I listened to this perfidious counsel, hoping to spare my adored mistress the anguish of knowing this affair. The young girl absolutely refused to listen to this proposal; and at the next hearing produced, as evidence against me, the offer I had made, and which I could not deny. I was in the greatest embarrassment; but one resource still

still remained, which was, to make oath that the child was not mine. You know, brother, that I never take an oath but with extreme reluctance; and it was with difficulty that I could persuade myself to yield to this expedient. Paying a visit however to my mistress, she received me with such coldness, and her father intimating that, till the process was decided in my favour, I must forbear my visits, all my scruples were removed, and I resolved to swear to my innocence. But I had a friend, a very honest man, who said to me— "Every thing is against you, my dear Lieutenant: the advocates, the magistrates, and all persons who have heard of the affair believe you guilty, and you will swear that you are innocent?"

"Because it is the truth," said I.

"Yet no one will credit you."

"On my soul, brother, I was so harassed by this dilemma, that I was on the point of attempting my existence. If I did not take the oath, I lost my cause,

and

and my mistress; if I did swear, I was looked upon in the eye of the world as perjured, and all confidence in my honour and virtue was at an end. It was then I understood the extent of my passion; but for that, I should have found it easy to fix my resolution."

"You might have taken an oath, brother, in all honour and justice," said the Collector. "Brother, your conscience was pure."

"And it was pure, even though I did not swear. If I did not act as I ought to have done, God will forgive me: my intentions were good. I refused the oath, and I did well, as I will shew you. The young girl was next to be examined, and I made myself sure of gaining my cause; for I could not believe she would take a false oath, although my advocate had assured me to the contrary.

"She appeared on the appointed day; a clergyman addressed her in a pathetic and solemn discourse, and still the unhappy creature

creature persisted in declaring that I was the father of her child. When she prepared to take the oath, a cold sweat bedewed my forehead. Scarcely had she repeated the first few words than I cried out——— Stop! she shall not swear!"

"She has sworn, brother," cried the Collector; "for it is the intention, and not the words, which constitute an oath. She has sworn, I tell thee!"

"Ah, I know that! but when she lies upon the bed of pain, or on that of death, abandoned perhaps by all the world——— No! I would not have taken from her the consolation of believing she had not taken the oath! And say what you will, if this mode of thinking be not just, 'tis at least humane and generous.

"After that I was bound over to provide for the child, and the cause was so terminated."

"And your mistress!"

"She beheld me with contempt. I endeavoured to persuade her, that I was compelled

pelled to act as I had done: but she persisted in believing me to be guilty, and married my rival. I did not expect my conduct would have been thus recompensed: I thought God would have forbid this union!—Can she ever taste of happiness with such a husband?"

"And the child, brother!"

"Throughout Dresden I passed for its father; and I left off attempting to assert my innocence, which no one credited. I perceived even that my friends were on the watch to observe how I should comport myself to the child. It seemed as if Providence had ordained me to be its protector; notwithstanding which I had a painful combat to sustain with myself, ere I could determine to adopt a child—the sole cause of my misery.

"The girl was safely delivered; but afterwards falling into a lingering illness, she was unable to suckle her infant. This I thought was another indication of the will of Providence. I hired a nurse. During

ing the first three months I would not see the child. At length one day it was brought to me."

"It is as lovely as a Cupid," said the nurse, "and as like Mr. Lieutenant as one drop of water is to another." The infant smiled on me. I had always thought of the little creature with horror; but then it excited my compassion. What! said I, shall I not be unto it a father! I took it in my arms, and pressed it to my bosom: I felt as if a warm breath played upon my heart. At that moment my wish, that I might one day possess a son, was accomplished. The mother abandoned the child wholly to my guidance, and I placed him with the wife of a village curate, who had lately lost her only son. He has been with her about eighteen months. If you wish it, brother, he shall soon be brought here."

"Why have you concealed this adventure from me so long?"

"I own

"I own I was ashamed of being so grossly duped."

"I will engage for my wife," replied the Collector, "that she will take the charge of your child with pleasure. He shall find equally a father in you and me; and the affection he will have for you shall stand in place of that you expected from a wife. I am vexed only that our Pastor knows any thing of this matter. He is a very worthy man, but he loves to find fault with every thing which does not accord with his opinions; for no other will he permit to be right.—What is the boy's name?"

"His christian name is William; and he is called Krause, after his mother."

"Well, William Krause shall be welcome to my house."

CHAP.

CHAPTER III.

PORTRAITS.

THE Collector, Frederic Rautenbach, was six feet high, and rather of a meagre appearance. His figure expressed as little sensibility as if he had been made of marble; yet, on certain occasions, his eye was piercing, and his manner so impressive, that at such times, few persons ventured to contradict him. A discussion with him was a matter of apprehension; for he possessed an inveterate spirit of contradiction. By the most whimsical reasoning, of which it was almost impossible to discover the associations, he was acccustomed to form the most perverse conclusions. He had, therefore, the character of an original: to paint him by a single touch, his opinions were always at war with the last person with whom he conversed. Whatever appeared to others important, to him was ridiculous. If an attempt was made to move

him by the recital of a generous action, or some affecting story, even then he could not disguise his passion for opposition: although, at other times, the slightest trait of feeling had such sudden power over him, that he could not restrain his tears; and his wife every day reproached him with being weak and compassionate. Although he was not learned, he had read much, and could happily apply what he had gathered in his reading and observations; although he affected to despise the sciences, he seized on every occasion, to introduce them into his conversation. He was the declared enemy of all systems, which was an eternal subject of dispute between him and the Pastor Bellmann.

The Lieutenant imagined that he and his brother had the same character. The Collector thought so too; but they were the only persons that entertained this belief. The Lieutenant was in fact the reverse of the Collector. He was of a tranquil temper, mild, and extremely flexible; but

but whatever difference there was in other respects between the characters of the two brothers, they were not the less united in friendship. They loved each other tenderly. If the Collector was harsh with his wife, his people, and all the world, he was always of the same opinion with his brother. They had a peculiar manner of communicating their thoughts to each other, in the presence of a third person: a pressure of the hand, a look, a smile, mutually communicated their thoughts. The Lieutenant had no volubility of speech, but when he was in conversation with his brother; and the Collector always then listened, as if sensible he could learn something from the Lieutenant. Madame Rautenbach was always in a sort of petty war with her husband: she valued herself much on her domestic economy, which he sometimes endured patiently enough; but when she expatiated too much on this subject, which was not seldom, he used to say—" Madame Rautenbach,—*every one has his button-holes.*"

This proverb *(Every one has his button-holes)* had its origin in a conversation he had one day with his barber. The whole town made a jest of the barber's gasconades, but the Collector felt an exquisite pleasure in listening to them; and when he was a little out of spirits, the company of this boaster was sure to put him into good humour. The barber never spoke without exaggeration. He had put his son apprentice to a tailor. The Collector, one day, asked him how his son took to the business. "The boy is a perfect genius," answered the barber. "What do you think, Mr. Collector? He was only six months with his master, when he was ordered to make the button-holes of a gentleman's coat. Ah, Mr. Collector, such button-holes! you cannot imagine how beautiful they were!—half the city went to admire them!" The Collector repeated this story to his wife, and then with a grave look he said, "Every one has his button-holes, which are admired by half the town, and half the world." The button-

ton-holes thenceforth became a proverb in the house.

The young Pastor, M. Bellmann, was firmly persuaded that the world could not exist a single day without learning and learned men. He had, in truth, many gleanings of learning in his head, and was not a little vain of the exact order in which they were classed there. He was obstinate in his systems, and prided himself on his candour and moderation. The Collector's violence against the sciences, was the constant apple of discord between them. The Pastor was infinitely superior to the Collector in the art of controversy; but could never gain any triumph over him; the Collector always escaped by some pleasantry, and quitted the list by changing the ground, in a manner so ingenious and gay, that the audience believed he had gained the victory: at least he had the laugh on his side. These two persons were agreed on one point, *that nothing in this world ought to inspire a lively interest, or occasion any serious grief.* But the reader will

soon see how far they continued to respect this opinion.

"The Pastor has his button-holes," the Collector would sometimes say, when the other was not present to hear him.

The Pastor, however, was an excellent man. He was on good terms with the whole world, and did generous things with a great deal of pleasure. He perfectly well knew the duties of his sacred office: his sermons were admirable, and he preached by example, consoling the unfortunate, administering to the infirm, and aiding the poor with all that lay within the scope of his power.

The Pastor had a young wife, whom he passionately loved; and who, in domestic economy, was the rival of the Collector's lady; whom, however, she excelled by her proficiency in music, drawing, and embroidery. She dressed with taste, reasoned perfectly well on the plays and novels of the day, and was extremely affable in her manners.

CHAPTER IV.

THE ARRIVAL OF THE HERO OF THE TALE.

MADAME Rautenbach resolved to receive the new-comer with all possible solemnity, and secretly invited the Pastor and his wife to be present. The boy arrived, and was carried into the parlour by Madame Rautenbach. The Pastor took the child, and with a grave oration delivered him to the father of the family. The Collector smiled, but did not answer. The Pastor's wife, who was then pregnant for the first time, took the child in her arms, pressed him to her heart, kissed him, and dried a tear that escaped in despight of herself. The Collector then embraced the boy, saying, with emotion, "May God accomplish your kind wishes for him!" and gave him to the Lieutenant.

"You take from me what I hold dearest in the world," said the Lieutenant, "but it is best so." He spread his hands over the

the child to give him his blessing. His brother, who understood what passed in his mind, said aloud, " He is now consecrated by a tear of forgiveness, and by the hand which has promised him protection!" He then gave the child to his wife, who carried him out of the room.

" Children bring cares," said the Pastor addressing the Collector, " and you have doubtless formed a plan of education for this boy."

" You know that I do not much approve of systems. God grant that I may continue to love the child, and then he will not want for a good education!"

" It appears then that you are not the friend of a systematic education."

" A bad education may be the fruit of systems. We are too intent upon cultivating the talents of children, and take too little care of the heart. We conclude that all is done when the memory is surcharged with learning, and forget the progress of feeling."

" These reflections touch me nearly,

Sir;

Sir; I shall soon have occasion to apply them myself," said the Pastor casting a tender look at his wife. "I shall be anxious to shun the evils you mention."

A dispute followed between the Collector and Pastor, on the subject of philosophy, which was extravagantly exalted by one, and degraded by the other. They separated without conviction on either side; which is usual enough when philosophy is the subject.

When the Curate and his wife were gone, the Lieutenant said to his brother— "I honour philosophy and philosophers. Some of your expressions against them gave me a great deal of pain; for I have heard that Philosophy is the daughter of Truth."—"Brother," replied the Collector, "I pray that God may prosper the true philosopher who is distinguished by an elevated mind, believes in a divine Providence, prizes virtue above all other things, and maintains an absolute empire over the passions. He is free from the fear of death, which he ever meets with constancy. Such

was Socrates, who smiled, as he raised the poisoned cup to his lips. He was indeed a philosopher: What do you think of him, brother?"

"I think he was the most respectable of men."

"It is to be lamented," said the Collector, "that the name of philosopher has been assumed by men, whose lives bear no resemblance to that of Socrates; and who only knew how pompously to explain, why this sage believed with such firmness in God, and the truth. They are the most insolent of men: they expect the human race to assent to their dogmas, and the power alone has been wanting, to the raising of scaffolds in support of their philosophy."

"Brother," he continued after a pause, "I think we will not make such a man of that boy, on whose head you this day placed your hands to bless him."

At this instant the Collector's wife brought the child into the room; and the Collector taking him in his arms, said with vehemence,

vehemence, "No! no!" He then gave him to the Lieutenant, who firmly repeated the same words.

CHAPTER V.

EDUCATION.

THE two brothers resolved not to begin with the boy's education before he had attained his sixth year; till when, they with reason left the care of him to the Collector's wife; for although, at first, Madame Rautenbach was a little prejudiced against the child, yet after a while she loved him as if he had been her own. He learned to read as an amusement, and he was master of the art, just at the time when the Collector had projected a fine method for teaching it; and was busily employed in reading all the children's books he could find, to select one for the little William. The Pastor maintained, that the boy ought to read books which treated of principles, and the Collector, books of example.

One day, while they contested the point, the child standing between the Lieutenant's knees reading Gellert's tales, burst into tears. The Lieutenant with difficulty restraining his own tears, said, "Why do you cry, William? you are not a baby."

As the Collector could find no book fit for the child, he continued to read Gellert's fables; but whenever the two brothers were absent, the Collector's wife procured him other books. Among these was a translation of the Children's Magazine by Madame de Beaumont; and as the Collector's wife had a most profound veneration for whatever she saw in print, and beside, remembered her husband's prohibition, never to read, recite, or relate any thing that was not true, she refrained from observations on the tales in that work. The result was, that the boy naturally finding a resemblance between Moses and the magicians, and the Collector's wife assuring him most gravely, that whatever he read respecting Moses was true, William's imagination was filled with

the history of the Bible, the Greek mythology, and all sorts of fairy tales, believing one set of notions as implicitly as the other.

He concealed his new knowledge from the Lieutenant and the Collector; for he could perceive that the Collector's wife permitted him to read the Fairy Tales only by stealth. Madame Rautenbach, who had never read any thing but the Bible, the Psalms, a book of cookery, and a treatise on gardening by Luder, received as much pleasure from the Fairy Tales as little William himself; and this stolen pleasure was so ardently pursued, that the Collector soon declared, the boy was exceedingly apt in his learning, because he found him read, not only very fluently, but with peculiar feeling and expression.

The Collector's wife was not a little terrified when one day, taking it into her head to speak of the Fairy Tales, her husband said to her, with an air of great severity, "I hope you do not fill William's head with such nonsense?" Some days after,

after, however, the Pastor maintaining that the words ghost, fairy, magician, devil, and even angel, should never be pronounced before children, the Collector could not pass the proposition without argument: "Sir," said he, "is not the world around us filled with sorcery, and enchantment for children? Let them believe as much as they will of fairy scenes, and such like things: the delusion will pass away with time; and, I would ask, if the fantastic world of infancy, would not be a delightful dream to the grown-up man; for which he would gladly sacrifice all reality?" He held this argument, merely for contradiction's sake, according to his manner; but his wife now thought herself justified in her choice of fairy tales, and therefore borrowed as many as she could from the Pastor's wife; and whenever she was alone with William, made him read to her in one of those charming books.

William acquired a competent knowledge of the war of seven years from the Lieutenant, who frequently related its

events.

events. In Chardin's travels, he learnt the history, manners, and geography of Persia. Gesner's poems was also one of his favourite books. The Lieutenant had bought this work at the recommendation of a friend, but had never opened it. William happening to find it, carried it and read it to his mama, as he was used to call her, who was as well pleased with the acquisition as the child.

The Collector was kept entirely ignorant of all these studies; he taught William the mathematics, the elements of which he knew very well. When the occasion offered, he read to him a chapter on morals, which he accompanied with elaborate comments, and frequently added a bitter satire against men and their vices; but what is most important to be observed is, that he could not gain the child's affection, who, like every other person in the house, regarded him only with profound respect.

William, however, studied closely under his direction. He understood arithmetic pretty well, drew geometrical figures correctly,

rectly, and had made a good progress for his years. He even took a pleasure in works on morals, since he frequently found in them, examples taken from history, which was one of his great sources of delight. The Lieutenant, on his part, still continued to describe to William the war of seven years. He shewed the child plans of battles, and draughts of fortifications, and then made him recite the battles of Prince Eugene, and Marshal de Turenne.

If, sometimes, the Collector reprimanded William without cause, the boy hid himself in the most secret corner of the garden, where he shed plentiful showers of tears, and then consoled himself, by running to his adopted mother, and declaring his innocence.

"Sweet boy," said his mama to him one day, "why did you not justify yourself?" —he was silent, except that he ejaculated the name of *Hossein*. This Persian, William regarded as the most illustrious of men, whose patience in adversity had inspired the child with a noble passion for

emulating

emulating him ; his mama, therefore, was the only person who knew how great was his sensibility. The Collector thought he perceived apathy to be his distinguishing character. The Lieutenant reflected with pleasure that he might one day make a good soldier ; and of all who knew him, the Pastor was the only one by whom he was not beloved. When William's name was mentioned before the Pastor, he would say, " That boy is nearly seven years of age, and what has he learnt excepting a smattering of mathematics ?"

CHAPTER VI.

THE HEROINE OF THE TALE.

WILLIAM had been about a year at the Collector's, when Henrietta the Pastor's daughter was born. The Pastor's wife had borne another child, which being extremely feeble, lingered a few months, and died. The joy of the parents was therefore extravagant at the birth of Henrietta, beau-

tiful,

tiful, finely formed, and healthy. At the rejoicings on her baptism, the Pastor made a long speech, to detail his plan of education; which was to render Henrietta the most accomplished of women. He did not forget to grace his speech with several sarcastic remarks on the education given to William, at which the Collector's wife and the Lieutenant were very much offended; but the Collector, who on all other occasions opposed the Pastor, was here silent, although his own proper conduct was more peculiarly censured.

"I am a little curious," said the Collector's wife when they returned home, "to know what sort of a princess the Pastor will make of that infant? Our William, thank God, is quite another thing; he is a little angel!"

The Collector was silent. "I wish I may live," she continued with an air of insult, "to see this fine sort of education!"

"God give them grace," said the Collector, "to execute one part of their plan!"

"But,

"But why, brother, did you not point out its faults?" asked the Lieutenant.

"It was a parent's work; for the whole world I would not have touched it. I never had a child, and for that very reason many things may appear to me foolish, which may be the wise disposition of nature. It is true, that I do not know why parents will always find in their children the promise of every virtue and perfection; but so it is; and why should I disturb a pleasure so praiseworthy and natural? With respect to what the Pastor said of our William, the parent may be allowed to be a little arrogant, the day on which his child's baptism is celebrated."

"What appeared to me most extravagant," said the Collector's wife, "was, to hear the mother say, she would not change her fortune to be a queen!"

"God be praised!" said the Collector raising his hands, "for having granted to millions of beings, an enjoyment to which a crown is contemptible! And why should we deny a sentiment of exultation to a

woman,

woman, who has known how to endure the pangs with which children are brought into the world?"

The Collector's wife was far from being convinced, but she did not continue her remarks, because she guessed that her husband perceived the little jealousy which preyed upon her heart. She approached the chair on which the little William, then three years of age, was in a profound and gentle sleep: she impressed a kiss on his rosy lips, and said, with a sort of triumph, to her husband, "May God never permit my maternal love for this child to be extinguished!" The Collector threw his arms round his wife, and embraced her. The Lieutenant said gaily, "I shall make the little Henrietta a god-father's present; she shall have the best harpsichord I can buy. The Pastor has found out to-day, for the first time, that his wife's harpsichord is good for nothing. I dare say, he thought within himself, that one day his daughter would be able to play on it."

A different scene passed in the Pastor's house.

house. The parents, on each side of the infant's cradle, alternately predicted her a happy life. The mother said, "I hope she will be handsome."

The Pastor replied, "She will, my love, if she resembles you; but what is beauty, to the advantages which result from education? I think, if we are not unfortunate, I shall make an accomplished woman of this child; and that men, the most estimable for their fortune, rank, and merit, will contend for her hand."

"I am happy," he continued, "to possess some acquirements, which I had used to consider as trifling; such as a knowledge of music, and drawing, and the living languages. As soon as its little hands have strength enough, I will teach her to touch the harpsichord: fortunately I have time enough on my hands to be her tutor in all things. To say the truth, I entertain aspiring hopes for Henrietta; I think she may one day become something more than the wife of a pastor."

It was thus that the father and mother

traced

traced the destiny of their child. The Pastor's wife saw in the little features of the infant, the perfect signs of future beauty; and the father, in every motion, every cry, discovered the most favourable disposition for every sort of talent.

The little Henrietta was reared with the most anxious care. Each day the mother discovered some new beauty in the child's exterior, and the father in her mind. And when the Lieutenant gave his god-daughter a new piano-forte on her birth-day, the transported parents were happy to find, that even the Collector's family could not overlook the child's talents. The Pastor placed the little Henrietta before the instrument, and if she seemed to keep time with her feet, he concluded that she was born to be a prodigy in music.

Although the Collector's wife continued to feel a jealousy of the mother, she openly acknowledged that the little Henrietta displayed a quickness of mind above her years. The child, scarcely three years old, knew several songs by heart, and was of

the most cheerful disposition. She was very early the favourite of the Collector, who never sat a moment in the Pastor's house, without Henrietta on his knee; and never went to the fair, without bringing her some little present.

The Collector's partiality for Henrietta produced a great deal of good-will between the fathers of the two families. The Pastor, who, in truth, had heretofore considered the Collector as a little self-sufficient, began to discover his mistake, and acknowledged, above all, his discernment in appreciating the merit of children.

The two women were yet the furthest in the world from being on cordial terms with each other; for the Collector's wife was mortified to see William eclipsed by the qualities of Henrietta: he was silent, sullen, and fearful, especially in the Pastor's house: nothing could then tempt him from the side of his adopted mother. She at such times would exhaust every artifice to draw forth the talents of her boy. She turned every conversation upon geogra-

phy,

phy, and the mathematics; but William did not the less preserve his silence. He would rather support the reproaches of his mama, than display his knowledge. Once indeed, she prevailed on him to give his opinion on a remarkable fine picture, representing the last day; but here he was very unfortunate, for he took the Virgin Mary for Fatima holding in one hand the head, and in the other the heart of her two slaughtered sons, *Hossein* and——

"In the name of all that is surprising," cried the Collector, "who is this Hossein?"

"He was a son of Fatima," replied William, "who embraced a voluntary death to ensure the eternal happiness of his successors."

"Hossein is a fool!" said the Collector, "where has this child got all this nonsense?"

The Lieutenant shook his head. William was silent, his eyes filling with tears; for his dear *Hossein* had been treated with contempt. He hid his face on his mother's bosom. He could not understand how it

happened

happened that the family of *Ali* should be so little known.

The Collector's wife was obliged to hear with patience the praises lavished on Henrietta; for it was in vain to try, this time, to retrieve William's character from its disgrace.

From that hour, Madame Rautenbach sought occasion to depreciate the merits of the little Henrietta; she attempted even to give William accomplishments; she had him taught to draw, but he did not succeed; he learned music, but whenever he took up his violin, it was with visible repugnance.

"In truth," said the Collector one day, "this boy wants——I do not very well know how to express myself; it is not a head, and still less a heart; I believe he wants the gift of pleasing: whatever he does is out of season. The little Bellmann appears to sit down to her piano, at the very moment one wishes to hear her play; but this boy seems to wait for the instant, when all the clocks in the city are strik-

 ing,

ing, to give us an air on the violin. The girl sings her little songs just at the right time; she laughs, when every body else laughs; she weeps, because she sees some one in affliction: but the thoughts of this boy follow a thread, that no one can lay hold on: he unconsciously interrupts a conversation by the most abrupt remarks."

In fact, what the Collector said was just enough; but his wife would not allow it to be ill-humour in the boy. She found a pretext to quarrel with the Pastor's wife—refused to see Henrietta; and these two women became the most irreconcileable enemies. Whenever the Collector and the Pastor entered into a dispute, the Collector's wife embittered the mind of her husband against his opponent; and at a moment when it was least expected, he received from the Pastor the following letter:

"Without any portion of the esteem I bear for the integrity of your character being diminished, my dear Sir, it seems to me,

me, that an evil genius labours to destroy the affection that has subsisted between our families. Our interviews, almost always, overflow with gall: and there must necessarily exist some cause that prevents our good understanding. It certainly is not in our hearts; but it is perhaps in our manner of thinking and of viewing things.

"You look upon me as an intolerant man—but I am not so: I look on you in the same light; and possibly I deceive myself. Our disputes have also influenced the other members of our families. Our visits are no longer those of cordiality, and we shall finish by hating each other. Let us act like men. Let us adopt the only means that now remain to us; let us separate, till we can again meet as friends. This letter ought to prove to you how much I value your esteem.

"Your very humble servant,

BELLMANN."

The Collector read this letter at least ten times; and still he could not discover to what cause the Pastor's sudden deter-

mination was to be attributed. He at length put the letter in his pocket, and withdrew to his chamber; but there he could find no repose. On returning to the parlour he read the letter aloud to his whole family.

"With what haughtiness the Pastor addresses you?" said Madame Rautenbach. "Has a large legacy been suddenly left him? I am sure we never sought his acquaintance."

The Collector rose, and said angrily, "Wife, you have not understood a single word of this letter; and, I am sorry to say, you do not state the fact: we have all sought the society of the Pastor's family; and you more than all the rest."

"I!——Oh be not alarmed! I can survive the loss: I shall do very well without their company, be assured."

"I have my doubts respecting that:—I dare not say that you are not the evil genius of which the Pastor speaks. When they first came here, it seemed even that their arrival excited your jealousy. Has he

he not here written that your disputes have occasioned this rupture?"

The Collector looked earnestly at the letter which he held in his hand. "Brother," said he to the Lieutenant, "speak to me with the frankness of a friend—have I at any time gone too far in our disputes? Has any bitterness entered them on my part? I have argued with the best of my capacity, but have I ever had recourse to raillery, which personally affected the Pastor? God forbid! Do you think, brother, that I could ever meditate such a thing?"

"No," replied the Lieutenant, "no more than the Pastor himself; but to hear you dispute, one would swear that you were the mortal enemies of each other. In your manner of arguing, brother, there is something —— if you will permit me ——"

"Speak frankly, brother. I wish to hear of my faults, and to correct them."

"—— Something sarcastic and insulting. To see oneself beaten by the enemy, humbles less than to see him carry

 himself,

himself, before the battle, as if he were sure of the victory."

"Something insulting! Do you think, brother, you accuse me of that with justice?"

The Lieutenant rose and placed himself in the middle of the room, and said with a sorrowful air, "I am sorry, brother, but, I have seen something insulting in your air."

The Collector took his arm-chair, which was his custom after similar scenes. He appeared lost in thought for more than an hour; then taking his pen he wrote to the Pastor in the following terms:

"You deny me your society. My family and I are extremely afflicted at this misfortune; but the idea that an old habit of mine, of mingling irony with my argument, is the cause, adds to my regret. I should be very glad, my dear Sir, if I could say, we will never dispute again, or at least that we will argue without bitterness; but to dispute is one of my hereditary sins, and habit is too powerful with

me,

me, to permit my arguing with indifference. I thank you for having spared my weakness in that which I may call your farewell letter. If I did not already esteem you most sincerely, your letter would extort my esteem; I am persuaded that while you wrote your hand trembled.

"It will be a great happiness to me, if occasion should ever arise to do you an important service, to repair my injustice, which sits heavily upon my heart; and in such case, in your thinking of me you will convince me, that you do not retain any anger against me.

"Your affectionate Friend,

RAUTENBACH."

The Collector's wife would gladly have read this answer. She feared that her husband was not sufficiently severe. "As to me," she said, "I will never cross his threshold."

The Collector knit his brows; but as he thought he had been already unjust towards his wife, he remained silent.

When the Pastor read the answer, he resolved instantly to go to the Collector's, so much was he touched with the frank manner in which the Collector acknowledged his fault; but his wife, who gave no credit to the sincerity of the Collector's expressions, absolutely prevented him; and as on the following Sunday, the Collector's wife, whom she met on the road to church, scarcely returned her salute, and as, in returning, she even looked at her with a degree of disdain, she was still more resolved than ever to prevent all accommodation.

CHAPTER VII.

THE PARISH CLERK BUCHLING.

THE members of the two families soon felt the want of each other's company, and wished for an accommodation; but though some advances were mutually made, they were fruitless. The Collector made long speeches to his wife on the subject, in which he proved that the thing could not happen otherwise.

"It

"It is a grievous thing, brother," said the Lieutenant, "that man is so unfortunate as to be compelled to do what he does not wish."

"It is, indeed," replied the Collector; "but do not let us, therefore, think the worse of the Pastor and his wife, or rather of man in general. What is necessary to the renewal of our friendship? A misfortune in one or other of the families, in which the Pastor or I will not fail to stretch out a consoling hand, and all misunderstanding will immediately cease. This at least is a consolation."

"I think as you do," said the Lieutenant.

"The Pastor and I," continued the Collector, "know that we do not hate each other; that we are capable of mutual assistance; and that, precisely because we are disunited, we shall do so, with the more zeal and generosity."

The Lieutenant was again of the same opinion, but he blamed his brother for not attempting every means of accommoda-

dation. "For my part," he said, "I dare not meddle with the dispute."

The Pastor Bellmann did justice to the Collector's character; he maintained merely, that it was impossible to live on terms of good will with him, because, said he, the Collector is the most absurd of men.

"He is also the most obstinate," added his wife; "I really believe, that he would wager his head upon a question, when he even thought he was in the wrong."

The sorrowful effects of this misunderstanding was felt in both families. William and Henrietta saw each other rarely: each of them lived in a circle of occupations entirely different from the other.

The Collector declared that he himself would every morning give William a lesson in his studies, but he did not pursue this plan, being unaccustomed to a regular and progressive mode of instruction. Thus William was often without occupation for days together; he went wherever he pleased, and did whatever he liked. Hence arose an acquaintance, which he

formed

formed with the two grandsons of the Parish Clerk, which soon grew into a strict friendship, and disgraced William more and more in the Pastor's opinion.

The Parish Clerk, Buchling, who had a daughter residing with him, a widow, with two sons, was at this period sixty years of age; but his fine black eyes still sparkled, as if they had been inflamed by the fire of youth. He was said to be proud, because his carriage was grave, and there was a certain dignity in his manner. From his first coming to the cure, the Pastor Bellmann was disliked by Buchling. Although the former Pastor was a man of intolerable pride, and treated the Parish Clerk as his inferior, yet they were on very good terms; no one therefore understood, why the Pastor Bellmann, who paid great respect to the haughty Buchling, and treated him as his equal, was far from being a favourite with him. The Collector was the only person who saw nothing extraordinary in that.

"The former Pastor," said he, "made

the aged Buchling wait in his antichamber, and compelled him to walk behind him to church; but, though his inferior in station, the Parish Clerk was in fact his master. The present Pastor hands him a chair, invites him to walk by his side, and, when they meet, gives him his hand; but then, he draws up rules for his school, and would innovate in his manner of instruction. The former Pastor called the Parish Clerk his inferior, and treated him as his equal; this calls him his equal, and treats him as his inferior."

Buchling was a very honest man, and extremely attached to the opinions he had received in his youth. His conduct was in strict conformity with the morals he professed, which is a matter of no small praise. The Pastor Bellmann spoke in terms of high regard of his zeal, and gave him books, with the counsel, to correct his principles of education by them. Buchling returned them without saying a word, and pursued his old method.

The Pastor Bellmann afterwards started several doubts respecting Buchling's religion,

gion, and laid down his own dogmas with a great deal of politeness. Buchling was silent on this subject also. But the Pastor, at length, would give lectures on religion in the school: the Parish Clerk then said, "Doubts, Sir, are a luxury to the learned, but a great misfortune to men in the ordinary occupations of life. There is but one line to follow, Sir, either to give the Bible an implicit veneration, or throw it aside. It seldom happens that a common mind enquires, where did you learn that precept? The preceptor's authority is the pledge of its truth, especially in the minds of children."

"Very well, my dear Buchling, I see that you have examined the duties of your office to the bottom; but it is because of your good sense and candour, that I recommend to you that it be one of your maxims, not to prevent the children from thinking for themselves."

The Parish Clerk blufhed, and was silent; for it was the whole pride of his life to teach his scholars to think.

The

The Pastor continued, "Children should be taught to ground their morality on principles of virtue which they comprehend."

The Parish Clark raised his voice as he replied, "And are you acquainted, Sir, with any other than this?—God, who created us, requires that we resemble him by our virtues.—This, Sir, is the principle that I impress on my scholars. The forms of expression, to which this may be twisted, import little. Sir, I believe in the Bible, and I say to myself, in this sacred book I find it is thus written, and I obey."

The Pastor, although extremely mortified, affected to reason calmly. He insisted upon exercising the reason of children, and hinted at the danger of certain points of doctrine. The old man answered, "Shew me danger in any one that I teach, and I will suppress it. But I cannot consent to say such and such things in the Bible are pernicious. I never lay before children matters they cannot comprehend. Erudition which is good for nothing

thing I would not impart to them, even if it were mine at command."

The Pastor felt the allusion severely, for he did not possess the art of simplifying his maxims. To conceal his vexation, and to offer something still to his pride, he continued to reason with the old man on the necessity of adopting his principles of education; but Buchling was more attached to his own than to existence.

The Pastor then thought of a new expedient to subdue the Parish Clerk, and he resolved to enlist the Collector in his party, knowing that Buchling held him in great esteem; but although the Collector defended the new opinions with his wonted heat, he did not perceive there was much to mend in Buchling's orthodoxy.

This was one of the absurdities with which the Pastor reproached him. The Lieutenant himself one day spoke to his brother on this subject; "You mistake the matter, brother," said the Collector, "the theology of the Pastor is merely learning, and on that disputes are endless: the

theology

theology of the Parish Clerk is the principle of his actions, and God preserve me from wounding the conscience of any one!"

The Collector had a profound respect for old Buchling, yet he did not send the little William to his school, without well knowing himself for what reason; or rather because he would not own to himself, that the principles of the old school master were not strictly orthodox. When his wife and the Lieutenant said it was time to send the boy to school, the Collector rubbed his forehead with a perplexed look, and said, "I have long formed a project of giving him lessons myself, during certain hours of the week, to teach him what he ought to know in matters of religion; I will begin immediately, call him hither."

The Collector remained four hours shut up alone with William, but with this fine beginning the affair ended, and the child was grossly ignorant of all the usual dogmas of religion.

The

The Collector, who had taken upon himself to instruct William in all points, suffered the time to pass by in preliminary arrangements, because he had suddenly determined upon a regularity and order, which were incompatible with the bent of his disposition. Add to which he had nothing to say on a subject, till he was heated by opposition. There was also a fluctuation in his own opinions, which continually crossed the boy's progress, it being usual with him to defend one day, what he had opposed the preceding evening; conscious of which, he frequently relieved himself from the embarrassment by saying, "when the boy is older, I will shew him what is right and what is wrong, that he may choose for himself."

It was thus that William had time to follow his own inclinations, and to go as often as he pleased to see Buchling's grand-children, with whom he made his first acquaintance at the tomb of the Countess Elizabeth.

This monument was at a little distance from

from the town, in a chapel surrounded by spreading oaks. According to an ancient custom, the chapel bells were rung on a certain day, which brought Buchling a small fee. The solemnity of the place reminded William of the tomb of *Sadi*, and it became dear to him from that resemblance. On one of those days, when it was usual to ring the bells, he approached the place; the Parish Clerk was there with his two grand-children. He perceived that William wished to see the inside of the chapel, and invited him to enter it. William surveyed the tomb, which was of marble, and examined the gothic inscription, which, however, he did not understand. He attentively regarded also the statue of the Countess, who on her knees, with her hands laden with chains, had her eyes turned towards heaven. When Buchling had finished his occupation, of ringing the bells, William expressed a wish to know the history of this woman: they all sat down on the steps of the tomb, and the old man began as follows:

"Elizabeth,

"Elizabeth, Countess of Greifenstein, or Grafenstein, says an antient chronicle, sold all her property and went to the East, to ransom her husband, who was a prisoner among the Saracens. She arrived at Jerusalem, and thence continued her rout, accompanied only by a faithful servant. This woman, young, beautiful, and of a delicate frame, crossed the burning desarts of Syria, and arrived, after a dangerous journey, at a castle on the banks of the Euphrates, where her husband groaned in fetters. The lord of this castle was struck with her beauty, and would have made her his mistress; but faithful to her husband, she resisted every seduction, and every threat.

"The Barbarian was at length touched by her constancy, and promised her husband liberty, on certain conditions. The first task imposed upon her was, to procure the deliverance of the Saracen's brother, then a prisoner with a savage people, on the other side of the Euphrates. Elizabeth did not hesitate an in-

stant;

stant; she passed the river, won by her prayers the hearts of the savages, and led back the tyrant's brother to the castle.

"She was then commanded to descend a cataract in a slight boat. She enters the boat, trembling; thousands of people cover the banks, applauding the courage of this generous woman. The boat drifting slowly down the river, approaches the precipice. Elizabeth binds her veil over her eyes, places herself on her knees, and thus drifts into the torrent. Beneficent Genii bear the boat along, she reaches, unhurt, the banks of the river, and returns to the castle amidst the acclamations of the multitude.

"Go and free thy husband with thy own hands," said the Saracen, presenting her the keys of the dungeon. She is led towards a court surrounded with an iron grating, which enclosed hungry lions. Elizabeth opens the gate without fear; the famished animals rush upon her; but suddenly they stop, creep to her and lick her feet. Faint with apprehension, she

she rests her arm on one of the lions while opening the door of the dungeon, she frees her husband from his chains, and leads him forth between a double row of Saracens, who sing her praises.

"She again traverses the same desarts, accompanied by her husband; supports his courage, searches roots for his food, and dips her veil into every well she finds, to procure him water. They at length reach Jerusalem, take shipping, and arrived happily at the Count's castle.

"What was the recompense of so many sacrifices?—of such courage, and such exalted virtues?—ingratitude and infidelity."

William shuddered at these words.

"Hardships and a burning sun," continued the old man, "had tarnished the delicate beauties of the Countess. Anxiety had effaced the roses from her cheeks, and tears had dimmed the fire of her eyes. She was still lovely, but her beauty was no more than the shadow of that which had fled. Her sister, young and beautiful, lived with her. The Count every day

saw

saw Erdmutha, for so this young lady was named, and a guilty passion was kindled in his heart. In vain did he abhor his treachery, and represent to himself that, to the Countess, he owed life and liberty---every day his love acquired new force.

"When it happened that Elizabeth related what she had suffered among the savages, and the dangers she had encountered to save her husband, his eyes were fixed only on the tears which fell during the tale from Erdmutha, and her beautiful bosom, agitated with sighs.

"He reproached himself with his injustice to his wife; he even shed tears, but his remorse was transient; had he known himself, he would have fled from the combat, instead of combatting his passion."

William was about to ask several questions at this part of the story, but his timidity kept him silent.

"Erdmutha observed the melancholy into which the Count had fallen, and her heart was moved with compassion.. Perceiving

ceiving the efforts he made with himself to conceal his sorrow from his wife, she conjured him to reveal the cause to her, in the hope of diminishing his anguish. He cast down his eyes, and was silent. She took his hand and redoubled her intreaties, but he abruptly fled from her, and shut himself up in his own room.

"The kind Erdmutha still did not lose all hope. She made new attempts to learn the secret of his sorrows, and, at length, too fatally succeeded.

"I love you, Erdmutha," he said, with a voice in which there was something terrible: "there is no peace for me but in death!" He rushed from her presence in a paroxysm of despair, and left Erdmutha overwhelmed with affright; for, in attempting to express her horror of the Count's passion, she had, alas! discovered that she partook his crime—that she loved him.

"The castle, once the abode of peace and joy, now became the dreary habitation of perpetual sighs and tears. Nor was it long

long ere the Countess perceived that her husband was the victim of some devouring grief; she blamed her own want of vivacity, and made continual efforts to appear more gay; she conjured her sister to aid her, in endeavouring to chase the dejection of the Count, and frequently led her husband to the apartment of Erdmutha, where, engaging them in conversation, she would find some pretence to leave them together.

"In these trying situations, Erdmutha, however, had sufficient empire over herself to conceal from the Count that she returned his love. He also, after the avowal that her solicitations had torn from him, maintained an inviolate silence: but his passion consumed him; he fell sick, and the Countess, transported with grief, supplicated her sister to assist in her cares for his restoration. Erdmutha from that time scarcely quitted the side of his couch

"One day, when they were alone, the Count opened his almost extinguished eyes, and said, in a feeble voice, "Oh

Erdmutha! let me be permitted to press my lips to thine, and I die satisfied." She did not immediately reply, but seeing the tears fall from his eyes, which were eagerly fixed on her, she bent over his pillow and touched his with her pale and cold lips, saying, "Ah! why cannot I die with you? I love you!" The Count pressed her to his heart, and turning from her, he almost fainted with the excess of his feelings.

"Oh my friend!" cried Erdmutha, with an emotion bordering on despair, "be more calm; I give myself up to love and thee! Elizabeth, by her heroic virtues, saved thee from slavery: I would do more, I would save thee from death by a crime! Yes, dear Count, I love you!" She pressed him to her palpitating bosom, and fell into a swoon.

"The Countess had heard their discourse from an adjoining apartment. She had scarcely strength to return to her own chamber. She took up the chains from which, with so much peril, she had deli-

 vered

vered her husband, and bathed them with her tears.

"She was informed the next day that the Count was better; and within three days he was restored to health. She knew that love had been the cause of this sudden change; but the grief she observed in his looks, and those of her sister, together with their tenderness for her, convinced her that the crime was not consummated.

"She gave a grand entertainment to celebrate the Count's health. At night she led the Count to the most retired apartment of the house, took the chains she had brought with her from the east, and taking his hand, she said, "Dearest husband, can these chains attach thy heart to mine?"

"The Count, pressing the chains to his bosom, replied, "No one but you could give such proofs of a pure and constant affection. Elizabeth! for you I will brave death, as you have done for me." Then embracing his wife, as if for the last time, he

he vowed eternal fidelity to her: in saying which he meditated a journey to the Holy Land. Elizabeth comprehended him, and did not hesitate to take her resolution.

"She besought him to defer his journey some days; "Because," added she, tenderly, "my strength fails me hourly. I am more feeble than you imagine; my days are numbered. Do not abandon my sister when I shall be no more. Become her friend, as you have been mine; and if heaven grants my ardent prayer, you will become more than the friend of Erdmutha.

"She folded him in her arms to conceal her pallid countenance and her tears. Afterwards she entreated him to conduct her to the convent, in which she had been educated; "For there," she said, "I will pass some days with my friend, the Abbess."

"He accompanied her to the convent; but instead of returning to the castle, where he knew he must remain alone with

Erdmutha, he remained in the neighbourhood of the Countess. Eight days afterwards, the Abbess announced to him the death of his wife, and communicated her last wish. The Countess had besought him in her last moments not to abandon her sister, but to remember her late prayer to heaven in their behalf.

"This intelligence was not true. The Countess caused this chapel and tomb to be erected; and beneath this roof she remained till sorrow had terminated her life. The Abbess ordered this monument to be erected over her ashes, with this inscription to be engraved on it:

"*Love is more powerful than gratitude.*"

"*These chains could not secure his love.*"

During the recital of this history, Buchling had intently observed William, whose animated looks had excited his attention. He had watched the successive emotions of his soul. His eyes were at first filled with tears; and when the old man had finished

finished his recital, he looked in the most earnest and solemn manner upon the statue of the Countess. Buchling's grandsons continued to look at him, expecting he would finish the story; but the old man rose, quitted the chapel, and left the young people together.

As he had expected, a conversation ensued among these three children. "Grandfather," said Rhodolphus, (who was the elder of the two, and was then thirteen years old,) "forgot, that shortly after the Count enjoying the chase, accompanied by Erdmutha, whom he had married, for the first time discovered this chapel, and I believe," said the boy, "that he killed himself."

"Yes," said William, appearing to awake from a profound reverie, "the Countess ought not to have done this."

"It is the Count of whom I speak," said Rhodolphus, who supposed that William had not understood him.

"I know it," replied William; "but what is the fate of the Count to us? I think

think of Elizabeth," pointing to the marble statue. "The generous Elizabeth!"—his voice faultered; "yet, she ought to have died without this chapel, without inscription: this monument occasioned the Count's death."

"He deserved to be punished," cried both of the other children.

"Ah!" said William, with an elevated voice, "would he not have been sufficiently punished when, at the last day, the Countess would have appeared before him and have disdained him?"

At that moment old Buchling entered the chapel: he eagerly pressed the young William to his heart, and said, "Dear boy! you are right; she ought to have died without this pomp. Yet she was a woman of a great and generous mind. But why," added he, "do you think the Countess ought to have died without erecting this tomb?"

William was at first embarrassed by the question; he, however, explained himself to the old man's satisfaction. "I know a

man,"

man," added he, "that died with less ostentation, and whose conduct was still more grand than that of the Countess."

"What man?" demanded Buchling with extreme eagerness.

William's eyes glistened with joy: he related the following story.

"The inhabitants of *Kufa* invited the Caliph *Iman Hossein* to assume the caliphat, as being the son of *Ali*. *Hossein* marched out of Medina at the head of his friends, advanced towards the Euphrates, and crossed those very deserts traversed by the Countess Elizabeth. His enemies advanced to meet him, and encamped on the banks of the river. The partisans of *Hossein*, at this news, took flight, leaving him with his family and a few faithful servants in the midst of those barren deserts. Here he lived for a month, enduring every kind of want; and, dying of hunger and thirst, he was yet compelled to defend himself against his enemies. He was at length bereaved of all hope, and worn out with incessant fatigue, his sword

fell from his hand; he took on his knee his youngest son, *Askur*, who was at that time about my age, and, seated on the ground, waited tranquilly the approach of the enemy. They advanced furiously: *Saab* aimed an arrow at the heart of the young *Askur*; the father attempted to save the life of his child; the arrow whistled in the air, and fixed *Hossein's* trembling hand on the heart of his son. *Askur* uttered a groan, and died. "God is merciful!" said the unfortunate father, addressing himself with a smile to *Saab*, who rushed upon him with his drawn sword; and *Hossein* died repeating those words, "God is merciful!"

"Dear boy," said Buchling, "*Hossein* was courageous; but the Countess Elizabeth was generous. She made a voluntary sacrifice to the happiness of another."

"Have I not told you," said William, with some degree of anger, "that *Hossein* was *Iman?* with a single word, he could have annihilated the whole world. *Saab* slew his son in his arms, yet he died rejoicing,

joicing, and even blessing *Saab*, to atone for the sins of the believers."

The serious air and the emotion with which William spoke, convinced the old man that he believed in the supernatural power of the Imans. He doubted whether he ought to undeceive him, but he was not long in forming his resolution. He again pressed the boy to his heart, and said, "Continue in this belief, my child. Thy soul is great enough to perform a like act. The name may be a fable, but the deed is no fiction. Go, my son, thou hast indeed a noble mind."

At this very instant the Pastor entered the chapel with his daughter. He embraced William with affection, and said, "You have indeed a noble manner of thinking. He had heard the whole conversation. He gave his hand to old Buchling, forgetting all former causes of quarrel. The other children could not conceive why William received more praises for a few words, than they had ever obtained by their best actions? The Pastor and Buch-

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ling having left the chapel, Henrietta asked several questions respecting parts of the history, which she had not understood. She then maintained that the story was a mere invention. The boys shewed her the marble statue of the Countess: "I am not convinced," said Henrietta, "but this tale is pretty—prettier than any that have been hitherto recounted to me." She placed some flowers, which she had been gathering, on the head of the Countess, and departed to join her father.

"William," said the Pastor to Buchling, as they walked together, "is a proof that man will believe any thing, even the most absurd tales; and that we ought to be on our guard to teach children nothing but the truth."

Buchling did not expect this conclusion. He remained silent, and the Pastor was obliged to ask for his opinion.

"I think," said Buchling, "it matters little the form, or even the truth of the histories we relate to children, provided that we always teach a good moral. You

see

see the most singular superstition has produced the grandest effect upon this child."

"The circumstance of atoning for the sins of men by a sacrifice, is not so singular," interrupted the Pastor, smiling; "but how much these confused notions must perplex the understandings of children?

"A short explanation prevents all perplexity, and you, when you embraced William just now, confessed that his manner of thinking was noble."

"'Tis true, but that is not of consequence to this argument. I esteem that only to be virtue, which is the result of a precise knowledge of our duty."

"Then you deny almost the existence of virtue, for such a virtue, as you describe, is scarcely to be found.—The generosity of the Countess———"

"Was not a virtue," said the Pastor, interupting him; "it was, on the contrary, if you truly reflect on it, a crime."

Buchling knit his brows, and walked away discontentedly.

During this conversation, William was within the chapel, forming a league of friendship with the two grandsons of the Parish Clerk. The three boys embraced, and promised to love each other always. When Buchling returned to the chapel, he saw Rhodolphus holding William by the arm, he joined their hands, and said to them—"Be friends; he of you two, who shall love his friend the best, and have most consideration for him, will make the best man."

Buchling inviting William to remain with him, while he sent his grandsons home to his house, to bring fruit and some milk, easily drew from the boy the manner in which he had gained his knowledge, and how ardently he loved his Persian histories.

"I was four years in Persia," said Buchling.

"You!" exclaimed William, in a transport of admiration, "you in Persia, in that happy country, that paradise!"

"During the four years I was there," said

said Buchling, "six kings ascended the throne, and were each assassinated by their nearest relations; their finest cities were reduced to ashes, and their fair fields, covered with ruins, or deluged with blood. At length a fortunate rebel, named Kerin, gaining the throne by monstrous crimes, gave peace to Persia. My child, there is no paradise in this world, but where all men are virtuous, and contemplate death without fear." The old man continued to relate various facts of Persia, in order to correct the illusions William indulged in.

William seemed to enter upon a new world. He was like one just emerging from a frightful solitude, to enjoy the blessings of society. The conversations of Buchling chased his former dreams, and inspired him with a wish to study the human heart. In this temper his affections attached themselves to Rhodolphus, with inconceivable ardour. Rhodolphus observed the singularity of William's character, and said thus of him to his grandfather—"William is so ignorant, so little

informed on some things, and then he reasons so well on others, that I am ready to think he has two different kinds of souls in him."

Buchling thought it was high time to disengage William from his childish studies, and spoke to the Collector on the subject, who then learnt, to his utter dismay, that the boy's head was full of fairy tales, and all sorts of marvellous histories. He hastily summoned his wife, and demanded what books William was accustomed to read?

Madame Rautenbach produced her whole collection, and frankly acknowledged she had provided them for the boy's amusement.

"By heaven!" cried the Collector, "it is too much folly to endure! and you knew, too, how heartily I detest these books—a fine collection truly!"

"You would not suffer the child to go to school. It was necessary he should learn to read; and I first procured the Children's Magazine, for the purpose of teaching

teaching him to read. The tales in that are but a small part of the work. You always said you would be his master yourself; but you never gave him any instruction. A child ought not to be idle, and therefore I gave him all these books. I read them myself, and, I must say, I found them very entertaining."

"God knows! there may be no end to the prejudices they may have instilled into the boy---I think you might at least have consulted me."

"My dear friend, you would have found reasons for interdicting every book: It surely is better to be ill taught than to know nothing."

The Collector would willingly have continued loudly to testify his discontent, had not the Lieutenant shewn by a gesture, that he agreed with the last words of Madame Rautenbach; and he began to consider if he had not himself been in the wrong.

He struck the floor with his foot, as he again ran over the titles of the books. "*Fairy*

"*Fairy Tales; the Enchanted World.*—Sir," said he to Buchling, "there is nothing in the world that I hold in so much abhorrence as tales. They are indeed the invention of the Devil."

"Brother," interupted the Lieutenant, "when we were boys, we read them with pleasure."

"And perhaps now, I might read them without being melancholy; but we are talking of information, of education."

"I think we did receive instruction from them. I do not see that either of us are the worse for them."

"That may be, but the education I have planned for this boy does not admit of such works."

"Yes, the education you have planned," said Madame Rautenbach a little maliciously; "but these books are very well suited with the education he has received." The Lieutenant again made a sign of approbation.

"My dear, do you know you have made this boy a Mahometan? He sincerely believes,

believes, as our friend here tells me, in Mahomet, the twelve Imans, and the resurrection of the Turks."

"I have spared no pains," replied Madame Rautenbach, "to give him just notions of religion."

"By heaven!" cried the Collector, half seriously and half ironically, "my wife has taken the Alcoran for the Bible."

"No," said Buchling, "it is from Chardin that he has gained all his knowledge."

"It was you, husband, that gave him that book," said Madame Rautenbach, with an air of triumph. "I suppose Chardin was in your plan of education?"

The Collector felt himself a little disconcerted, when he saw the Lieutenant again giving his wife a nod of approbation.

He was still unwilling to take all the blame to himself. "But, dear wife, you ought at least to have told him that his Socrates, his Familiar Spirit, his Hossein, his grandfather Mahomet, and his father Ali, were madmen or knaves; that these were tales as absurd as the sleeping beauty

in the wood—this, Madame Rautenbach, is what you ought to have said."

"The child embarrassed me," she answered. "I began by saying, this is a true story; he replied, if this is true, the rest must be so; or, if any one is not true, why is not this other equally false? I got out of this difficulty as well as I could, and finished by reading without comment."

"My dear wife, God will regard thy worthy intentions, and pardon thee."

"Amen!" said the Lieutenant.

"Brother," said the Collector, as if he had gained a victory, "if the Pastor Bellmann was here, he would be obliged to lay down his arms, for the Jesuits in China hold precisely the same conduct as my wife; they say to the Chinese, believe in our Loyola, and you may still believe in your Foh. What proof have we to believe that they have been all knaves, as the Pastor says?"

"I believe you are right," said the Lieutenant, "but that is not the thing we are talking of. What will you answer

swer if I make the same objection to you, that you did just now to your wife?"

"It is a very delicate point," said Buchling.

"We will consider of that," said the Collector, after a pause. He then turned the conversation to another subject.

The Collector was glad at the bottom, that the dispute had taken this turn. He had a great deal of indulgence for Buchling's piety, and never disputed with his wife on matters of faith; but, like his brother, he believed that to the pure heart all is pure, simply with this difference; that each spoke these words in a different sense, the Lieutenant meaning, that purity of heart and life sometimes requires the indulgence of a little superstition, and a few prejudices; and the Collector, that a man may be virtuous with any religion.

They all sat near the window, each looking for William. The Lieutenant drew near his brother, and said, "I suppose you are considering of the manner, in which

which you ought to address the child, but take care, brother, that, in plucking up the weeds, you do not at the same time root out the flowers. When the question turns on what is *the truth*, you are sometimes a little too much in haste; at such times, you do not always think of the consequences of your reasoning."

"You shall be present and hear what I have to say."

The boy entered, throwing back the brown hair with which nature had luxuriously adorned his forehead, and with a smile on his countenance, approached the Collector, who held out his hand with uncommon marks of tenderness. William, to whom this was unexpected, said, "My father, what do you wish of me?"

"I have," said the Collector, casting his eye upon the books, "been looking over your little library. You know, my son, that I do not desire you should read a great many books; one ought to read with a careful choice, and thus things that are good and useful may be found, even in

books

books that are not exactly what I would choose."

William blushed, but took from the collection his Chardin and Gesner.

The Collector guessed at his thoughts: "In ten different works," he continued, "scarcely is one to be found that is altogether good; and it is the same with all other things in the world. In these tales, which are far from being unexceptionable, you may nevertheless gather instruction; and as they bear the title of tales, they ought not to lead you into any error respecting their real nature. Almost all books teach us, that firmness, courage, patience, and good-will, are what we ought to cherish; even dishonest men require a certain degree of good faith towards each other. We have seen impostors, who from ambition, have seduced, and subdued entire nations; but none of them have ever, designedly, preached the cultivation of crimes. Mahomet deceived the Arabs, (here William listened with the greatest attention) by dogmas, which he uttered as divine; but

were, nevertheless, of his own invention. His object very evidently was, first to unite the Arabs, and afterwards to subdue them. Assuredly, he was either a knave, or a fanatic who deceived himself. With all this, he preached the doctrine which God himself has placed in the heart. Mahomet taught this grand truth—*There is but one God*, indulgent and beneficent.—Follow the example of God, and be good and beneficent.

"My son, all the religions in the world are founded on this maxim. It is this, which is taught by the Christians, the Jews, and the Bramins. The rest is the error of man. As for example, the Turks, who expect to gain heaven by destroying the Persians, deviate into error. God enjoins the love of our neighbour; no opinion which induces one nation to massacre another is good, or comes from heaven.

"By these marks, my son, it is easy for you to distinguish the truth. I will soon buy you other books; and we will read in them together, from time to time."

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He tenderly pressed William to his bosom, and the Lieutenant placed his hand upon his head. When William had quitted the room, the brothers gave each other their hand, and the Collector then retired to his study. . . .

CHAPTER VIII.

THE RECONCILIATION.

THE Collector now gave William access to his library, the doors of which had hitherto been carefully shut against him; the Collector maintaining, that a child should not acquire knowledge by books, but by accidents, whose influence would be more striking to his imagination, and cause him the more faithfully to retain what he learned. Perceiving, however, that chance had done so little for William, as to leave him grossly ignorant on many common subjects, he ran into the other extreme, and suffered him to read without

out any manner of guide, or restriction. When the Lieutenant reproached his brother with this want of caution, he replied smiling—

"Are there not two of them, Rhodolphus and William? What they read will be constantly the subject of their conversations, and one will rectify the errors of the other."

The two boys read with avidity, history, travels, poetry, and translations from the ancients. The Collector, now and then, took upon him to guide their taste, but, according to his custom, the matter was usually at an end when he had announced his intention. The boys applied themselves eagerly to the study of the Greek and Roman histories. The noble and heroic actions which these histories related, filled their souls with an ardent admiration, unmixed with the smallest alloy of envy. A virtuous emulation of the great men of ancient times fired their hearts, and they panted to imitate the generous heroism of a Brutus, a Mutius Scævola, or

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an Horatio Cocles. The memorable saying of the second Lycurgus, that *Death ought to be itself an action, and not the end of all actions*, was constantly repeated by them, as the noblest of maxims.

The Collector sometimes indulged in making the eulogy of modern times before the boys, and would have opposed their fondness for ancient history much more decidedly, had he not feared to wound his brother, who partook of their enthusiasm.

"Brother," said the Lieutenant, "there is something so grand, so sublime in ancient history, that I cannot forbear to call it the reproach of the great men of our time."

The Collector smiled; in truth, he felt the justice of the Lieutenant's remark, but wherever he found enthusiasm, he could not forbear to oppose. His respect for his brother would not allow him to make his opposition so vehement and severe as he would have done to any one else; he contented himself with contrasting the heroes of ancient and modern times. To

 Timoleon,

Timoleon, he opposed the great Gustavus Adolphus; he made a pompous eulogium on Christopher Columbus; gave to Alexander the surname of Cortes; and above all, boasted of the invention of *printing*; which, when disputing with the Pastor Bellmann, he was accustomed to call the Asses-bridge of the human understanding. From this mode of conversation, the boys first learned to know something of the history of their own country.

Although William was three years younger than Rhodolphus, he surpassed him in all their studies; but as he was extremely taciturn, his superiority was rarely discovered, and never excited any jealousy.

At this period Rhodolphus attained the age of eighteen, and a new affection took possession of his heart, which had hitherto been wholly devoted to his friend.

The Pastor Bellmann began better to appreciate the worth of Buchling's character; he frequently resorted to his house, and, as he found that Rhodolphus played extremely

tremely well on the violin, he invited him to his, to accompany Henrietta, when she touched the piano-forte.

Henrietta was then but twelve years of age, but her appearance was that of fourteen. The Pastor had neglected no means that could give a finish to her education; and as she advanced in age, the charms of her person developed themselves. Her parents had resolved, the better to ensure her success in it, not to present her to the world, till as late as possible; and in the pictures her father occasionally drew of love before her, his colours were so faint, that she understood it no better than she did the more turbulent passions. But she had been charged a hundred times by the Pastor never to neglect her exterior.

She had not so soon understood the design of this command, but for the exposition of her mother, who repeatedly assured her that a girl with her beauty, her accomplishments, and her wit, would find it very easy to become the wife of a man of distinguished birth and fortune.

 Having

Having thus fortified the heart of Henrietta, the Pastor believed he should risk nothing in presenting to his daughter the son of the Parish Clerk. "This young man," he said to himself, "cannot be dangerous to Henrietta; beside, her mother shall always be present at their interviews, and if she perceives any thing displeasing, he can be instantly dismissed."

Rhodolphus was struck with the beauty of Henrietta, and as he was too inexperienced to disguise his emotions, she soon discovered the effect of her charms, and was never more amiable and attractive, than when her father procured her the opportunity of being admired by Rhodolphus. The latter did not hide from his friend how engaging he had beheld Henrietta to be, whose beauty and accomplishments now became the constant theme of their conversations.

The passion of Rhodolphus daily augmented, for Henrietta always received him with smiles. If by accident they were left a moment alone together, the animated

and

and tender manner in which Rhodolphus expressed his admiration of her talents gave such pleasure to Henrietta, that she sought all occasions to be left alone with him.

Whichever way the occupations of Rhodolphus directed his steps, he always found some very good reason for passing by the Pastor's house. Some chance or other was almost sure at those times to bring Henrietta to the window. The young lover began to be more exact in his dress, to study the graces, applied to the practice of music with new ardor, and watched with trembling impatience for the arrival of the moment when he was accustomed to repair to the Pastor's house. None of his efforts to please her were lost upon Henrietta.

At length Rhodolphus began to comprehend the nature of his feelings, and threw the veil of mystery around them in the presence of his friend. With the discovery of his passion to himself, he became more timid and respectful to his mistress;

mistress; yet Henrietta perfectly comprehended all that was passing in his mind, and managed with so much address, that her parents did not perceive the passion of Rhodolphus, nor imagined that their daughter was at all more affected by his presence than she would have been by that of his grandfather Buchling.

Rhodolphus thus emboldened, found a pretext one day to call at the Pastor's house, at an unaccustomed hour; but the Pastor quickly dispatched the business about which he came, and did not invite him to remain a moment longer. Rhodolphus, notwithstanding, seized another occasion to repeat his visit, and was received with extreme coldness.

"This boy," said the Pastor, "no doubt, imagines he may come and go as he pleases. Truly, if he did not play so well on the violin he would never set his foot here again." Henrietta observed, with the most careless air possible, that it was certainly an advantage to sing to such an accompaniment.

At

At the next lesson Henrietta appeared to treat Rhodolphus with more than her accustomed indifference, yet she found means to bestow on him some secret smiles, which dissipated the fears, he, on his first entrance, had entertained; and he then formed the project of seeing Henrietta out of her father's house. He knew that she sometimes visited the daughter of the Syndic of the village, and he shortly after met her there. Henrietta invited her friend to walk with her: the heart of Rhodolphus palpitated violently; for Henrietta, in making this proposition, cast on him a significant look.

This interview had no other consequences than to give a fixed direction to the desires of Rhodolphus. In order to facilitate his intercourse with Henrietta, he resolved to bring about a reconciliation between the families of the Pastor and the Collector. He spoke to William of the Pastor's regret; William repeated the conversation to the Lieutenant: he related even, on his friend's authority, praises that Madame Bellmann had

had bestowed on the economy and good management of Madame Rautenbach. The plan, at first, equalled the hopes of Rhodolphus: for the Lieutenant bowed his head in token of amity whenever the name of Bellmann was mentioned; and the Collector's wife often observed it was the duty of a good Christian to be at peace with his Pastor.

The Collector had nothing to object against a reconciliation: he had secretly desired it a long time, for the pleasure of an argument.

"Well, my dear friend," said he to his brother, "then let us make him a visit."

Madame Rautenbach said, the first visit should come from the Pastor, and the Lieutenant was of the same opinion.

Rhodolphus was now completely embarrassed, for he well knew the Pastor's family had never testified the slightest wish to be reunited to the Collector's. At length he recollected that M. Bellmann very much desired that Henrietta should learn dancing; but the expence of engag-

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ing a dancing-master to come from the city to attend one pupil was more than the Pastor could afford. If, thought Rhodolphus, I could persuade William to learn to dance with Henrietta, the reconciliation must follow.

"Dear William," he said, "if you were to ask your father to give you a dancing-master, then your family would be again united to the Pastor's, and—"

"A dancing-master!" exclaimed William, "and why a dancing-master! What good could it do me to learn to dance?"

Instead of replying to this question, Rhodolphus, deeply blushing, embraced his friend, and began to speak of the charms and talents of Henrietta: William looked at him attentively.

"I believe," said he, "Rhodolphus, that you are in love with Henrietta!"

"What can give you such an idea?" asked Rhodolphus, confusedly; and breaking off the conversation, he abruptly left his friend.

William now reflected on the late con-

duct of Rhodolphus, his love of solitude, his perpetual walks before the Pastor's house; and was convinced that he had divined aright. He instantly returned home.

"My father," said he to the Lieutenant, blushing and hesitating, "I wish I could learn to dance."

"What can have inspired you with such a wish, William?"

"As I am to be a soldier, I think—and you know my mother so often finds fault with my aukward gait.—Henrietta Bellmann might learn at the same time, for her parents long since would have given her a master, had not the expence been too great."

"You are in the right," cried the Lieutenant, joyfully; "you shall learn to dance, William, and that will reunite us all."

He went instantly to communicate the project to his brother.

"Are our hearts so cold," said the Collector, "that a dancing-master may be the instrument of our reconciliation?—Get your hat, brother, we will go to the

Pastor's

Pastor's. If our presence does not affect him, the negociations of a dancing-master will be useless. Yes, let us go! When you have seen how the Pastor puts his hand into mine, we will think afterwards of the master."

When they arrived at M. Bellmann's Henrietta was at her harpsichord, and Rhodolphus accompanied her on the violin.

"Dear Bellmann," said the Collector, "we have disagreed: the fault was mine: I know my weakness; but it has neither been hatred nor contempt that has hitherto impeded our reconciliation."

The Pastor, taking the Collector's hand, pointed to the young people, and invited him to another apartment.

"No; I will not stir from this place till we are reconciled."

"Would you have the young people be witnesses of our conversation?" asked the Pastor, in a low tone of voice.

"I would have all the world be witness, M. Bellmann, for I have been unjust to you, and it is good for young people to

hear their elders confess their faults. These young persons may act a similar part in the course of their lives. As I have already declared, M. Bellmann, I come to offer you again my friendship, and my society; and I hope you will pardon the failing of a man who has grown grey in its company."

"Brother, my dear brother!" cried the Lieutenant, with emotion.

Bellmann, his eyes filled with tears, threw himself into the arms of the Collector, pronouncing the words "Peace and friendship.—We were both wrong," said he, after an affecting pause. "Behold! Henrietta, this is the happiest moment God has granted me!"

The Collector, whose heart melted more and more, pressed the hand of Henrietta, and walked a few turns in the apartment to regain his composure. He then spoke of William's learning to dance. Rhodolphus threw a significant glance on Henrietta: she instantly divined that this reconciliation had been his work. She

looked

looked at him, and blushed, for the first time in her life. Her heart beat quicker, and was filled with a lively emotion.

Rhodolphus flew to seek his friend, and embracing him with rapture, ejaculated the name of Henrietta, and left him.

He certainly loves her, thought William: then love gives happiness. William almost wished to experience the same sensations as his friend.

CHAPTER IX.

THE BILLET.

ARRANGEMENTS were quickly made with a dancing-master, and the children of the principal inhabitants of the village were to partake his instructions. The Pastor obliged Henrietta to attend to a long discourse upon the *statics* of dancing, in which the words grace, position, movement, were not spared. He instructed her,

her, that there were many classes of dancing; the dance of nature (leaping for joy), the dance of society, and the dance theatrical.

"I wish I knew," said Bellmann to himself, "whether the Collector has thought of engaging a dancing-master who at least understands the principles of his art."

The Collector was at first silent, but growing impatient at the length of the Pastor's harangue to Henrietta, he asked, "And where, in your system, do you class the dance of death; the true *salto mortale?* If ever we have need of *grace*, it is certainly in our leap from life to the tomb."

This play upon words convinced the Pastor that the Collector was still unaltered; but he forbore to enter into a dispute, and consoled himself with hoping he should find an obedient disciple in the dancing-master. The young people rejoiced in the prospect of so engaging a study, and Rhodolphus and Henrietta al-

ready danced the *dance of nature*, for they leaped for joy.

The chosen dancing-master had been a hair-dresser, and a hussar; he was, nevertheless, an eminent dancing-master of the neighbouring city. When he arrived, his scholars were all assembled at the Collector's, who had scarcely conversed an instant with him, ere he turned to his brother, and exclaimed, peevishly, "This man is a fool!"

"Do not be angry," replied the Lieutenant, "although the dancing-master's numerous bows did not afford him any satisfaction.

"Does not the position of the feet," continued the Collector, "form an angle of one hundred and sixty degrees?—I wish every one to be consistent with his station. A preacher may be allowed to put more emphasis in his conversation than ordinary persons; and a soldier is expected to display more confidence than other men; but a preacher, who, in speaking, would preserve the accent of prayer,

must

must either be a fool or a hypocrite. Brother, I know that you have attacked batteries, and faced the mouth of the cannon with stedfast courage, but no one has ever heard you boast of despising death."

The Pastor, meanwhile, had approached the dancing-master, and questioned him on the principles of his art. The dancing-master, who could not conceive to what all this tended, bowed incessantly, declared his astonishment at the profound knowledge of M. Bellmann, and entreated that he might be allowed to profit by his continued remarks. He knew well how to obtain favour for his ignorance by such complaisance, and thus adroitly possessed himself of the remote terms of the art which the Pastor had cited.

When the lessons were ended, the dancing-master named to the Lieutenant his having served in a regiment of hussars, and the Lieutenant instantly engaged him to teach William to ride. He began this course of instruction on the following morning, and as William manifested neither

ther genius nor inclination for dancing, he was permitted to substitute his lessons of riding for those of dancing. It was Henrietta and Rhodolphus who made a distinguished progress in the art of dancing: Henrietta, because her father obliged her to continual practice, and Rhodolphus, because it was the means of seeing Henrietta, and because he always danced with her.

Rhodolphus did not yet obtain every thing he wished; the Pastor or his wife were always present at these lessons; and so closely guarded their daughter, that he could only express his passion by tender glances, or an occasional pressure of the hand.

The vanity of Henrietta had been fostered to the extreme by her parents, and by the triumph she had always obtained over other children, her competitors. She now renewed her acquaintance with William, whom she had scarcely seen for some years, and of whom her father often said, "That boy might indeed have been something,

thing, if he had not been educated so strangely." She had also heard the Collector, who was not given to bestow praises, declare—"That William had the innocence of a child, the courage of a man, the dignity of a monarch, the head of a sage, and the heart of an angel." Yet this young man was the only person in the circle of all those she knew, who neglected the company of Henrietta.

Vanity and coquetry united to render Henrietta eager to attract the attentions of William. She bestowed on him her sweetest smiles, adorned her charms, and displayed her accomplishments in the most alluring manner. She neglected nothing that could tend to captivate the heart of William, and she perceived she had succeeded. Not that William's deportment was less distant than before, but his looks were more expressive, and his manner more respectful. He always spoke to her as if he were addressing the greatest person on earth; and Henrietta was more flattered by the distant and awful respect of William,

liam, than by the lively solicitude of Rhodolphus.

A romantic passion took full possession of the heart of William, which he carefully concealed from all eyes, that he might not wound the feelings of his friend.

Rhodolphus attained his nineteenth year, and was extremely pleasing in his person. Henrietta was fourteen, and her lover often confided to William his grief, that he dared not speak to her of his love, and that his situation did not permit him to solicit her hand. William stimulated him to exert his talents and his activity for the amendment of his fortune, and engaged to procure for him the protection and assistance of the Collector. Rhodolphus was already a good musician, but that art did not seem considerable enough for his views, and he determined to devote himself to some learned profession.

William imparted his friend's plan to the Collector, who shook his head and observed, that Rhodolphus was tolerably

well

well informed, but had no learning; Latin for instance.

"He can learn it," said William. "In three months he shall know Latin, and then my father—"

The Collector smiled. "In three months! Well, then I will assist him."

"Do you understand Latin, Sir?"

"A little; just enough to know, that you should have said three years, instead of three months. However, commence your studies, and be assiduous. I doubt not you will succeed."

The young men began to study Latin with ardour, emulation, enthusiasm, and a thirst of glory. They adopted a new method; by the help of a translation they read an author, and made themselves a grammar. The Collector was astonished at the rapidity of their progress, and seconded their efforts. Nothing could exceed their application. The hours of dancing, or those of accompanying Henrietta, were the only recreations of Rhodolphus, and he willingly sacrificed the pleasure of

seeing

seeing her as often as he was before accustomed to do, in the sweet hope that he was preparing himself to become one day her husband.

As the moment approached, for he had but a few months longer to remain in the village, that he was to separate from Henrietta, he began to think that his labours gave him a claim upon her, and entitled him to declare their motive and their design.

He went one day to Henrietta's, when he knew that her mother was at the Collector's. She expected him, and had contrived to engage her father in another apartment.

"To-day," said she when Rhodolphus entered, "my father cannot assist in our lesson, important business detains him."

She pronounced these words in a flattering accent, and Rhodolphus was not slow to understand the hint. Laying his violin upon the harpsichord, after an instant of silence, he, trembling, took the hand of his mistress. Henrietta dared not raise

her

her eyes, her cheeks were covered with blushes.

"Adored Henrietta!" said he, sighing, "shall we ever find another moment equally propitious to our wishes?"

"*Our*"—she repeated to herself, not a little piqued.

"Oh God!" he exclaimed, "how happy should I be, if——"

"Good Heaven! what is the matter with you?"

She turned her eyes upon him, and found the tenderness of his impassioned looks so irresistible, that she bestowed on him a smile of the most enchanting sweetness.

"Oh Henrietta!" he cried with ardour, eagerly grasping her hand.

She pushed her chair a little further from his—he rose and threw his arms round her waist.

"Let us practise this sonata," said she with vivacity, opening her music book.

Rhodolphus took up his violin, but the Pastor entering suddenly, had time to observe,

serve, that Rhodolphus had been sitting very close to his daughter. Henrietta played with rapidity, and maintained an appearance of the most perfect composure, but Rhodolphus was incapable of understanding a note.

The father frowned, and regarding them attentively, abruptly terminated the sonata, by placing his hand on the violin of Rhodolphus.

The Pastor had no doubt that something particular had passed in his absence, and when he had dismissed Rhodolphus, he retired to his chamber to consider of the manner in which he should interrogate his daughter. He had more than an hundred times maintained, with the Collector, that, in a like circumstance, to allow a woman a single instant to recollect herself, was to instigate her to frame a falsehood. Nevertheless, he allowed his daughter a full half hour to prepare her answer. When interrogated, Henrietta replied, "that in playing the sonata a faulty passage had put them out of time, and that Rhodolphus

phus had sat down by her to count the bars."

The Pastor was silent, and Henrietta believed herself acquitted; but her father had learned it was by her contrivance so many persons had called upon him at the same time. He had questioned them, and each had declared that hour had been indicated by Miss Henrietta. He demanded an explanation of this circumstance, and she replied, without being in the least disconcerted, "that she had done so purposely to be alone with Rhodolphus. I am vexed," she added, "to be obliged to tell you the cause, it so disconcerts our plans, for we wished to arrange a little concert, with which to surprise you on the anniversary of your birth-day." She pointed to some music in score, which lay upon the instrument, and said that his sudden entrance, while they were talking of it, had thrown Rhodolphus into confusion.

The Pastor regarded her with an incredulous air, and even manifested considerable suspicion. He gave her also to understand,

stand that he should question Rhodolphus respecting what had passed between them. She shuddered with terror, and was on the point of confessing every thing, when the dancing-master arrived, who came to learn from the Pastor the dances of the Greeks.

Released by his entrance, she withdrew to her chamber, where she wrote a letter to Rhodolphus, and, with great dexterity, contrived to slip it into the hands of the dancing-master at the moment of his departure. Inconsiderate girl! The dancing-master read this billet, which was merely folded, and without a seal. He considered the matter, and debated whether it would be most to his advantage to serve the young people, or betray them to M. Bellmann: his natural love of intrigue determined him against the latter. He went to seek Rhodolphus.

"You are a happy man, Sir."

"Me! What do you mean?"

"M. Rhodolphus is in love with Mademoiselle Henrietta Bellmann, and instead

 of

of playing on the violin, he tells her romances. Mademoiselle sends papa and mama out of the way. But the scheme fails: papa suddenly returns, and surprises the young lovers quite *mal-à-propos*.. Was it not so?"

"What does all this nonsense mean?"

"Pshaw! young man, I should have done just the same at your age. You may as well confess the truth; Mademoiselle Henrietta is as handsome as an angel. Here is a letter from her, in which she tells you how to impose on papa."

Rhodolphus read the letter with astonishment and grief; his heart smote him for the deception that had been practised on a father. He no longer attempted to deny his love, but he spoke of it in terms of shame and repentance. But this passion and its consequences, which in that moment appeared to Rhodolphus so criminal, were treated as a mere bagatelle by the depraved buffoon before him; who not only laughed at it as a pleasant adventure, but desired to become the confidant

of

of Rhodolphus, and offered, if he would abandon himself to his counsels, to forward his secret interviews with Henrietta, and compleatly dupe the Pastor.

The propositions of this vile seducer were addressed to the passions of Rhodolphus, and for an instant tempted the young man to step aside from the path of honour. Virtue came to his aid, and he trembled to behold the abyss of infamy which yawned beneath his feet. He flew to William, and confessed all.

"Save me," he cried, "I abandon myself to thy guidance. William—be my guardian angel!"

The youthful friends, in reading of the *familiar demon* of Socrates, had been inspired with a wish to possess such a *familiar*, and made a convention with each other: "I will be your guardian genius, and you shall be mine." In this moment of enthusiasm, they agreed that each should preserve his entire liberty. "But," said William, "if I feel undecided what conduct I ought to adopt, or you see me

wandering into error, then, Rhodolphus, take my conduct into your own hands —Act for me—Be my guardian genius. I engage implicitly to obey your counsel: you must engage the same faith, if at any time you have need of recourse to me."

The present important juncture was the first trial of the sincerity of their compact. William took the billet of Henrietta, read it, and said, "I will be your guardian angel—I will act for you."

Rhodolphus extended his arms to William, and faintly articulated, "Act, but spare Henrietta."

William embraced his friend. "Fear nothing," he replied, and then separated.

CHAPTER X.

RHODOLPHUS.

BE my guardian angel, yet resounded in the ears of William. He read again and again the billet of Henrietta, and his imagination painted the scene where the happy Rhodolphus seated at her side, and alone with her, dared avow the ardour of his feelings. He sighed at the remembrance of that envied moment. "Yet," thought he, "how unnumbered are the instances when Henrietta has particularly distinguished me; and how is it proved that she loves Rhodolphus?" The germ of self-love and vanity expanded in his heart. "If," continued he, "Henrietta no longer saw Rhodolphus!"—William now held in his hand the destiny of Rhodolphus. Should he speak to the Collector? Should he impart to him the letter of Henrietta? Would not the Collector immediately confide to M. Bellmann the

danger of his daughter?—-Rhodolphus would be sent to a distant college, and Henrietta—(his heart throbbed with tumultuous emotion)—would be wholly his.

These ideas passed through his mind with the rapidity of lightning—He extended his arms towards the dwelling of Rhodolphus, and tore the billet to atoms. "No," said he, "no person shall know this transaction; never will I betray my friend."

He turned homeward, his eyes sparkling; and his whole face enlivened with joy, and stood before the Collector and the Lieutenant, who had been observing him with surprise.

"What is that you were tearing to pieces, William?" said the Collector—what did that paper contain? From whom did it come? I think your looks, indeed, are not those of a guilty person, they seem to express innocence."

"It is my opinion, brother," said the Lieutenant, "that we have surprised him in the

performance of a good action; therefore, why should he hide it from us?

The Collector stooped to gather up the fragments of the billet, and William hastily, and with a look of great alarm and inquietude, put his foot upon them.

"Observe him now, brother," said the Collector rising; "can you still believe he was in the performance of a good action?"

"Yes," replied the Lieutenant, "I do. A man who has to reproach himself with the commission of a bad action, has not that air of satisfaction that shines in the eyes of William."

"Why then does he conceal that letter?"

"Take up the letter, William," said the Lieutenant.

William gathered together the torn pieces, and presented them to the Lieutenant.

"My father, it does not concern me," said he with a timid air—"You ought not to read it. I have given my word that no one should read it."

"Then I will not read it," replied the Lieutenant.

"But I—I will read it," cried the Collector impatiently. "What! a youth of his age to have secrets! I demand that he give me the letter with his own hands; it contains something we ought to know."

"Brother, when we were children, had we not also our secrets? Should we have confided them to a third person?"

The Lieutenant pronouncing these words in an accent of tenderness, himself presented the pieces of the letter to his brother, and the Collector receiving them, tore them into still smaller fragments, saying, "I imitate your generosity, brother. Nevertheless, this circumstance ---his manner too, make me conjecture things, which, at his age—If this dancing master——he is a wretch!---I have scarce ever beheld a man with a more villanous air."

"Judging only from his air, brother, dare

dare you pronounce upon him so severe a judgement?"

"Yes, an honest man even may be led to the commission of a bad action, but no one acquires the air of a villain till after the commission of a great number of crimes; for, observe, brother"——The Collector, according to custom, endeavoured to prove that which he did not very well understand.

"The dancing master is a wretch, as my father has said," interrupted William, "his heart is delivered up to the dominion of an evil spirit."

"William, what is it you know of him? speak, my son."

William continued silent, knitting his brows.

"Why is he a wretch? what has he done?" demanded the Lieutenant.

William, after a moment's reflection, answered, "Well, on the condition that you do not ask me who it is, nor to what end, I will tell you, that the dancing master has

endeavoured to seduce an innocent heart from the path of virtue."

"Ah William, William! who is it that he would have seduced?"

"My father, I have already prayed you to spare me that question."

"He shall depart; I will dismiss him instantly," cried the Collector.

"I shall take charge of that," said William to himself; "he must go this very day, the safety of my friend depends on it." He went in search of the dancing-master.

"What is it you have done?" said he to him with a feigned accent of consternation, "Rhodolphus has shewn a letter you put into his hands to my father, the Collector, who has written to the Pastor on the subject; M. Bellmann is in the greatest wrath against you; I advise you not to present yourself before him, and to think only of your safety."

The dancing-master interrupted him: "For God's sake, my dearest friend, go and bring me my great coat that I left behind me at your house."

William returned in an instant with the great coat, and assisted the trembling dancing-master to put it on, who, issuing from the back door of his habitation, traversed the most retired lanes, till he had gained that quarter of the city where he dwelt; and then, deeming himself in safety, he turned his face towards the village, poured forth a torrent of curses against Rhodolphus, Henrietta, and the Collector, and, gnashing his teeth, vowed vengeance with many bitter imprecations.

CHAPTER XI.

THE INTERVIEW.

ALTHOUGH the Pastor Bellmann yielded considerable faith to the declaration of his daughter, he was not perfectly at ease, nor could he forbear often returning to consider the excessive confusion h[e] had marked in Rhodolphus from the m[o]ment of his entrance. He resolved v[...] to discontinue the lessons of music [...]

 hesita[...]

hesitated concerning the lessons of dancing; for while he suspected them to be almost equally dangerous, his desire of perfecting Henrietta in the most graceful accomplishments of female education induced him to encounter the hazard.

He interrogated Henrietta anew. He entered into a long discussion on the passion of love, circumstantial details of its early symptoms, and the methods by which the passion might easily be counteracted. He maintained that love was only dangerous where it was not understood.

"To you, Henrietta," he said, "it would be an everlasting disgrace to be vanquished by a passion that only becomes formidable in proportion as it is encouraged, and which instantly disappears before the light of the torch of reason. I have bestowed on you, Henrietta, an education such as few young ladies ever received, nd you possess, my child, an understand- that should preserve you from being dupe of false impressions; your supe-y over other young persons of your

sex

sex and age allows me to form the most sanguine expectations of your conduct."

It was highly gratifying to Henrietta to hear her father treat so lightly of the power of love. He had, indeed, greatly exaggerated his own belief on the subject. In comparing, however, the description her father had given of the passion of love with her own experience, she discovered that she did not *love* Rhodolphus.

The hope her parents had so often encouraged, that she would one day form a brilliant alliance, again occupied her imagination, and increased her vanity: the result of all, was a mixture of confused ideas, of plans, and contradictory wishes.

Mr. Bellmann congratulated himself upon the propriety of the harangue he had made to Henrietta. He did not reflect that it was possible his daughter might form very dangerous conclusions upon his proposition;—that love was to be considered as a mere amusement; and continued his lectures on the passion of love, till he had furnished her with

with the most complete system of refined coquetry. He spoke of love in general: she adapted every thing to her own particular situation, and in pronouncing the word *love*, she thought only of the lover. She was surprised when her father interdicted the continuance of her lessons of music, and extremely chagrined when she found her lessons of dancing at an end.

Her father said that the Collector had dismissed the dancing-master; this she did not implicitly believe. The Pastor would probably have succeeded better with her, but for this suspicion: so dangerous is it to suffer children to believe they are duped. 'From the moment they perceive themselves imposed upon, they commence a system of deceit, and oppose dissimula-' tion to artifice.

Henrietta did not appear to regret either her lessons of music or dancing; she even played on her harpsichord with her accustomed ardour. She never spoke of Rhodolphus, or if compelled to name him, it was in terms of extreme coldness; nor

did

did she attempt to avail herself of accidental opportunities, which chance threw in her way, of seeing him. She resolved to prove to her father the inutility of his vigilant circumspection.

Rhodolphus was, nevertheless, far from indifferent to her; she desired his society, and felt that in its privation she endured the loss of her greatest pleasure. At length she grew irritated at Rhodolphus, that he made no attempts to see her, contrived no medium of intelligence between them, and presented himself not in those retired paths to which she so often resorted. How was she to account for this appearance of indifference? how could she excuse so palpable a neglect? Her displeasure augmented, and she sought an occasion to testify it—but the occasion was not to be found.

The adventure of Rhodolphus caused William many hours of reflection, which seldom turned to Henrietta's advantage in his mind. As M. Buchling had entrusted him with the key of the Countess Elizabeth's

beth's chapel, he one day conducted his friend thither.

"That Henrietta," said he, "should have placed confidence in such a vile man as the dancing-master, is what I cannot comprehend. You seem to think it natural enough, and I condemn you also."

"What could she do?" demanded Rhodolphus. "Her father is a proud man, and entertains lofty projects for her; what could she do?"

"Submit!" replied William, turning his eyes upon the statue of the Countess Elizabeth; "That woman," he added, pointing to the tomb, "was silent, and died."

"That is if she ever lived," said Rhodolphus in an ironical tone.

"Whether or not," William answered with quickness, "has nothing to do with the argument. It is very possible such a woman has lived, and may have comported herself as the chronicle describes of Elizabeth; that suffices for our question. For my part, I believe one may love and

yet

yet be silent: I know it," he added with an increase of vehemence.

William constantly terminated their disputes on this point, with saying, *no suffering is too painful for him to support who knows how to die!* With this maxim he silenced Rhodolphus' defence of Henrietta; he further insisted that Rhodolphus ought never again to see or converse with Henrietta without the sanction of her father. The heart of Rhodolphus rose against this opinion.

"Well," said William, "let us then submit our dispute to the Lieutenant and the Collector; you will see their judgment will agree with mine."

"Yes, without doubt," said Rhodolphus sorrowfully. "But how then shall I act —which way must I turn, dear William?"

"Be silent, and wait the event; perhaps —then"

"And if, in the mean time," asked Rhodolphus, with increased dejection, "if another---"

"The first time you see Henrietta declare

clare your passion to her; announce to her the conduct you mean to adopt, in order to render yourself worthy of her---But remember this must not be done without the knowledge of her father."

Rhodolphus rested his head upon his hands. He seized with eagerness upon the idea of rendering himself worthy of Henrietta: he started up with transport, and exclaimed, "I will be silent!---silent as that inanimate statue. I will labour without intermission, and then, William, then——"

From that moment Rhodolphus secluded himself from all society: if he sometimes visited the abode of William, it was only for the purposes of study. He carefully shunned every spot where he might chance to meet Henrietta, and never allowed himself to pass the house of M. Bellmann. He had but a single indulgence; on the day of the week when his mother was accustomed to clean the church, he climbed the belfry, from whence he could gaze unseen on the window where Henrietta was seated.

The love of these young persons did not grow under these restraints; it was even gradually declining to its decay. Henrietta, for whole days, forgot to retrace the scene that had passed with Rhodolphus at the harpsichord, or to conjecture the causes of his absence; and Rhodolphus had neglected more than one opportunity of mounting the belfry, when a trifling incident relumined the expiring flame.

Since the adventure of the billet the Collector had never lost sight of William for an instant. He heard him one day articulate, "*my heart knows how to be silent!*" and could no way explain that sentence, but by the supposition that William already loved. With his utmost watchfulness he could not discover that William's manner indicated a preference towards any of the young girls of the village; yet he still repeated to himself, "*my heart knows how to be silent!*" and at length imparted his suspicions to the Lieutenant.

The Lieutenant replied, "William has scarcely

scarcely quitted the schoolboy's jacket.—I cannot believe it."

"Under the schoolboy's jacket one may often find the heart of a lover," said the Collector. "If the heart once listens to the amorous chaunt of the nightingale, it retains the song. Unfortunately for their children, parents often imagine that the heart never begins to feel till the articles of marriage are signed."

His thoughts of William, to which the Lieutenant would not incline, preserved their form in the mind of the Collector; and being one evening at the Pastor's, he asked M. Bellmann, in the presence of his daughter, "if he had ever noticed in William a marked attention to any particular young lady." He then related the story of the billet, and William's subsequent expression. The Pastor smiled; he raised himself more erect upon his seat, charmed with so fortunate an opportunity of enlarging upon the defects of William's education. He predicted that the wild imagination

imagination and susceptible heart of William would be the source of the bitterest chagrins to him whenever he should mix more largely with the world; and that he already, perhaps, stood upon the very brink of ruin.

The Collector, for the first time in his life, was completely foiled by the Pastor's argument. He was too much occupied with fears for the happiness of this cherished youth, to find words to controvert the Pastor's assertions. He could not repress his conviction, that the heart of William was too susceptible.

"What can I do in this case, my friend?" said he, with an embarrassed air, to the Pastor? "How can I abate the ardour of his feelings without their being extinguished? For I would have him preserve a tender heart in despite of the misfortunes he may encounter."

The pride and pleasure of M. Bellmann increased with every word. Never had it before happened to him to have his advice demanded by the Collector. He uttered

uttered a long discourse to prove how readily the imagination of a child might, if allowed a wrong bent, become unworthily inflamed. "And yet," he added, with a air of triumph, "it is easy, with a little attention, to be master of the sentiments of youth."

"It may be," answered the Collector, gravely, "yet it appears to me to be very difficult. The Pastor, my late father, was a man of honour, who possessed a sound head and excellent penetration. I was, notwithstanding, too cunning for him. I do not scruple to declare to you, that in my youth I resembled William. I had prompt feelings, an ardent and tender heart. My father discovered something to alarm him, and he put the young lion in chains. I submitted to the bridle, but I learned to indemnify myself at night for the privations of the day. Withal, I must say, I was guilty of nothing for which I have found cause of repentance."

M. Bellmann smiled, and replied, "Permit me still to assure you, it is perfectly easy

easy to govern the feelings of a young person."

"It may be:—but I would see an example," said the Collector.

Before the Pastor answered, he turned to look at Henrietta; but she appeared to be entirely occupied with the translation of a book; and her father, resuming his position, related, in a low tone of voice, her history, without naming her, and his subsequent conduct.

"Very well," said the Collector: "the young lady must, however, have been very simple, not to have understood the restrictions to which she was subjected, or not to have known how to submit to them, though her feelings remained unaltered."

"She," said the Pastor, pointing Henrietta out to him, "once wandered from the right path; my prudence brought her back again."

"She!" replied the Collector sarcastically, "she has, to me, the air of wandering still."

"You would scarcely credit how simple

ple and credulous even children of the best understandings are upon certain points!" then, bending forward, he whispered something in the ear of the Collector.

Henrietta let her dictionary fall upon the ground, that in stooping she might hide a slight blush, for her father said, aloud, he had been relating her adventures. The Collector began to laugh, and she hastily quitted the room, to conceal her displeasure.

Not a syllable of the conversation between M. Bellmann and the Collector had escaped Henrietta; two things had been particularly remarked by her; that William loved, and that she was *simple* and *credulous*. She retired into the garden to muse upon the object of William's love. From whence came the letter which the Collector had named a tender billet?—On whom had William ever fixed his eyes while they received their lessons of dancing?—Had he not seemed to watch her every motion?—Had he not been accus-

tomed

tomed to retire to the obscurest corner of the apartment, where he seemed to deliver himself up to the pleasure of gazing upon her without interruption?—Could she have misinterpreted the ardour of his glances? No; it was impossible for Henrietta to doubt that William loved her.—And this billet! She presently composed an agreeable romance, of which the chief incident was, that Rhodolphus forbore to seek her, because he feared to excite the jealousy of William.

To play this distinguished part in three different houses was no small triumph to the vanity of Henrietta; yet, in the midst of these agreeable sensations, she remembered with vexation, that her father had described her as a simple, credulous girl, whom he could mould to any purpose. She felt herself inclined to prove that she was not so credulous, or her inclinations so easy to be moulded, by recalling to her favour her lover Rhodolphus, and granting him secret interviews. She smiled to herself as she arranged the manner in

which she could pursue her plan, and found there were a variety of methods; but she finished with saying, she would not avail herself of any. Yet she extremely desired to see Rhodolphus once more, and without avowing to herself it had that tendency, she decided on immediately paying a visit to the daughter of the *Syndic*. In her way thither she had to pass the house of the Parish Clerk. Henrietta had not been to the *Syndic*'s during many previous weeks.

The mother of Rhodolphus was standing upon a chair gathering the flowers of a honeysuckle that grew upon a treillage in the front of the house. Henrietta approached, stood beside her, and pretended to admire the honeysuckle, but her whole soul was absorbed in listening to the exquisite tones which Rhodolphus drew from his violin. The window of his apartment was open, and presently she heard him vary his strain and sing, in the most impassioned voice, some couplets that described, in succession, the emotions of

love,

love, of hope, of absence, and despair. His fine voice gave peculiar expression to his numbers. Madame Buchling even was moved by his plaintive tones; but far more Henrietta, who believed that he sang his own sufferings, and herself to be the object of his flame. She turned aside, to hide from the mother of Rhodolphus, the tears that escaped from her eyes. Scarcely could she contain her emotion when Madame Buchling stepped down from the chair, to entreat her acceptance of some fine branches of the honeysuckle; and, taking a single flower, she dried her eyes and departed without speaking.

The mother of Rhodolphus looked after her with surprise, and when her son soon afterwards descended, she said to him, "Methinks you young folks are very tender-hearted. A few sorrowful words of a song set you all a-crying. Miss Henrietta, the Pastor's daughter, was here just now; and when she heard you singing, the tears sprang from her eyes."

"When I was singing!—What said

she?—What brought her here?—Tears did you say?"

"Yes; I tell you, while you were singing; and then away she went, wiping her eyes, and without saying farewell. Nobody can deny that you sing excellently well, my dear Rhodolphus; even our Pastor acknowledges that."

The mother of Rhodolphus had not observed the excessive emotion of her son while she was speaking. She watched him as he crossed the church-yard with eager strides, and said to herself, "How full of spirits he is!"

Rhodolphus, almost beside himself, ran to explore the paths which Henrietta might have trodden. He hastened to a lane shaded with lofty trees, where they had heretofore met, but which neither of them had lately frequented; but scarcely had he now entered the lane shaded with lofty trees, than Rhodolphus found himself again in the presence of Henrietta.

He stopped, trembled, and had not the courage to approach nearer. She blushed

with

with a sort of shame of meeting him alone, in such a place, at such an hour. Rhodolphus, still mute, had no power to advance; and Henrietta had doubtless passed on, without receiving a word from her lover, had she not made a false step. Rhodolphus flew to save her from falling; he supported her in his arms. " Dear Henrietta!" he cried, scarcely knowing what he said. Henrietta disengaged herself from his arms, and thanked him with a slight curtsey, but meeting his eyes, which were fixed on her, swimming in tears, hers filled also. She stood still. " Ah, dear Henrietta!" he exclaimed anew, and throwing his arms again around her, he pressed her to his throbbing heart.

The loud report of a gun, and the footsteps of some person approaching directly towards them, roused them from their delirium of joy: Henrietta tore herself from the embrace of Rhodolphus.

" Where shall I see you again?" demanded he, with vehemence.

"This evening, in the summer-house in our garden."

The imprudent Henrietta then turned her steps homeward.

Rhodolphus, reclined upon the spot where he had clasped Henrietta to his bosom, dreamed only of love and happiness. Henrietta, he dreamed, was about to promise to be his, and every obstacle to their union seemed to be annihilated.

Scarcely had the first star of night sparkled in the hemisphere, when Rhodolphus, using every precaution to be unnoticed, stole to the garden of M. Bellmann.

Henrietta had reached her home; still greatly agitated by her rencontre. The precepts of her father, and a sense of what was due to her own dignity, as well as duty, forbade that she should clandestinely receive the visits of Rhodolphus. Yet she hesitated whether to obey duty or inclination. She had even descended to the summer-house, to unlock the door which

was to admit her lover; when she came to a resolution not to grant the interview.

As soon as the evening closed, she returned to the house, and seated herself at a back window, which overlooked the garden. The stars shone with uncommon lustre; it was one of the most beautiful nights of summer. At the slightest sound her heart beat with violence. At length she imagined she perceived Rhodolphus upon the wall, nor was she mistaken. Fearing a discovery, she hastened to the garden, with trembling steps. When Rhodolphus saw her appear, he leaped from the wall, and approached the summer-house. Many times did Henrietta vainly essay, with an unsteady hand, to unclose the door; and when at last she succeeded, and entered the summer-house with her lover, she was nearly overwhelmed with confusion and dismay. Rhodolphus reassured her, by his tenderness, he confided to her the plans he had formed for his success in life, and his hopes that he should soon be enabled to

demand her hand of the Pastor. "Ah," thought Henrietta, with a gentle sigh, "my father cannot have the cruelty to oppose my happiness."

Hitherto Henrietta Bellmann had always pictured to herself the man who should aspire to her hand, equally gifted by nature and fortune, and distinguished among his fellow-men by honours and titles. At this moment she believed she would rather pass her life in the house of the Parish Clerk, with Rhodolphus, than in the most magnificent palace in the universe, with another.

CHAPTER XII.

THE FATHERS.

ONE day, as the Lieutenant returned from shooting, overjoyed that he had killed six partridges, a brace of which he intended to give the Pastor, and one, as was always his practice, was for the Parish

Clerk,

Clerk, Buchling: as he approached M. Bellmann's house by the back-way, he saw Rhodolphus glide along the garden wall, and enter the summer-house. The Lieutenant stopped an instant designing to call to him; but hearing the voice of Henrietta within, he passed on to the house, and having presented the partridges, he sat down to await the appearance of Rhodolphus, who, he meant, should carry the partridge to his grandfather.

"Hum!" said the Lieutenant, "he stays a long time, I shall be obliged to go in search of him."

"Of whom, Sir?" said the Pastor.

"Only Rhodolphus Buchling. I want to give him this partridge for his grandfather."

"You appointed him then to meet you here?"

"Oh no! I saw him just now going into the summer-house in your garden; Henrietta was there, and these young people never know how time passes."

"In the summer-house!--In my garden!"

den!" cried the Pastor, rising in fury, and rushing out of the room.

"Oh!" exclaimed Madame Bellmann, "he will certainly do some mischief." The Lieutenant darted after him.

The Pastor with his foot burst open the door of the summer-house, and beheld his daughter seated close to Rhodolphus, whose arm encircled her waist. The lovers started up, terrified at the sight of the Pastor, whose rage took from him the power of articulating a word. Seizing Henrietta by the arm, he threw her with violence into the garden. He then turned with uplifted hand to Rhodolphus; but the Lieutenant opposed his passage.

"Wretch! villain!" he exclaimed, struggling to get free.

"Go! go! away, my child!" said the Lieutenant, pushing Rhodolphus towards the garden door, and keeping close behind him. The Pastor flung to the door after them with anger, and the Lieutenant found himself in the street without his hat.

"What

"What will be said of this?" demanded the Lieutenant, with an air of inquietude.

"I know not!" answered Rhodolphus, whose look testified grief and consternation. The Lieutenant took his arm, and drew him towards the Collector's. "We will do our best for thee!" said he; "let us consult my brother." They entered the house.

"What now!" exclaimed the Collector, observing the agitation of the Lieutenant, and the downcast mien of Rhodolphus, whom he still held by the arm. "What, you have taken this boy out of the way of chastisement, for some folly or other? Brother, I will have nothing to do with it. A parent has rights, and God knows how I should act in his place."

"You may believe me, brother, I thought the Pastor knew he was in the summer-house, otherwise I would have gone myself with the partridge, had it been ten times—"

"I don't comprehend you," said the

Collector; "what is the matter? Rhodolphus, what has happened?"

Rhodolphus had lost his courage. "I am undone!" he could only exclaim: and the Lieutenant related all that he knew of the affair. Rhodolphus, while the Lieutenant spoke, covered his face in confusion. The Collector frowned angrily, and the Lieutenant undertook the youth's justification.

"My brother," he said, in the sweetest accent imaginable, "no doubt you understand what this seems to imply—a connection between Rhodolphus and Henrietta."

"Oh yes! I can discern that much," interrupted the Collector, drily.

"I do not pretend that I approve of it, brother: it is certainly a great piece of levity——"

"And to enter a house without the knowledge, and even against the will of a father!—to extinguish in the heart of a daughter her sense of duty, and the affection she owes her parents! may that be called *levity*?"

"I remember my own youthful days, and I find that we should be indulgent, brother."

The Lieutenant took the hand of the young man, and cast on him a look of such benign pity as entirely subdued Rhodolphus, who now prepared to confess the whole of his fault to the Collector. Scarcely however had he pronounced a dozen words, when the Collector interrupted him. "Stop—I fear you will be tempted to conceal or extenuate some part of your error. Will you be sincere?"

"Yes."

"Has William been entrusted with your secrets?"

"Yes!"

"Then call him hither, Lieutenant; you can have nothing to disguise from your friend."

The Lieutenant returning with William, the Collector presented him to Rhodolphus, saying, "He shall be your judge." Then taking the Lieutenant's hand, they left the room together.

"Of

"Of what am I to judge—what has happened to you?" said William with a penetrating look.

Rhodolphus led him into the garden, where he faithfully related the manner of his late interviews with Henrietta, and prayed him to confide the same to the Collector and Lieutenant. The next morning William repeated to his parents the avowal of Rhodolphus: who arriving soon after, William demanded that all three should accompany him to the chapel of the Countess Elizabeth. They complied.

Rhodolphus leaning on the pedestal of the statue, said, "William now condemns me. This woman loved, was silent, and died."

The brothers desired an explanation of this, and Rhodolphus related the history of the Countess Elizabeth.

"You decide then," said the Collector to William, "that Rhodolphus ought to have followed her example?"

"I do," replied William.

"Well,

"Well, I like that a young man should not despair of the most difficult things. To love and be silent is a glorious action—to die is a violent one—to be silent is to die each moment. And you, William, do you believe yourself capable of this heroic conduct?"

"If I know my own heart, I am capable of it."

"If his heart answers thus, Rhodolphus, what will be the reply of thine? You see, my brother," he continued, addressing the Lieutenant, "our virtues are often nothing more than resolutions to be virtuous, and our faults transgressions against these resolutions. This seems to comprise all the history of Rhodolphus; for Henrietta—but we will not speak of her."

He then took the hand of Rhodolphus, and with the utmost tenderness remonstrated upon the errors of his conduct. He did not censure his love for Henrietta, but he proved to him, how much more generous, under such circumstances,

it had been to have confined that love within his own breast. "You believe," said he, "that your love for Henrietta is eternal, but she may forget you, or your passion may decay. This love, seemingly so powerful, may cease to be a present enjoyment, a hope for the future, and a delightful dream of happiness for passing years. It may, if not wholly forgotten, be remembered only with shame or discontent."

"Alas!" said Rhodolphus, "if you predict truly! If our love should become thus unfortunate!"

"I believe it possible," said the Lieutenant.

"A passion so ardent!—a love so perfect as ours?"

"Yes," said the Lieutenant in a decisive tone; yet he looked at his brother as if to request he would take the judgment out of his hands.

"Yes," repeated the Collector, "even sooner than a passion less ardent. Oh my son! you know not the happiness that awaits the man who for the sake of virtue

submits

submits to the hardest privations. You know not the recompense due to that love, which knows how to restrain itself within the bounds of duty."

"What is that recompense?" demanded Rhodolphus vehemently.

"The accomplishment of his heart's desire, my son."

"The hand of Henrietta!" exclaimed the youth, rising in a transport.

"Yes, Rhodolphus, her hand, if your love is as unchangeable as you at present suppose. Or, if your love be effaced, a recompense equally to be desired is still your own."

Silence ensued. The Lieutenant regarded the young man with compassion; William reflected on the nature of the recompense of which the Collector had spoken; Rhodolphus was absorbed in the idea of possessing the hand of Henrietta; and the Collector pondered on the manner in which he should resume his discourse.

"Hast thou decided?" he at length asked of Rhodolphus.

"Oh!"

"Oh!" cried he in rapture, "I will be silent, for then I may hope!"

"Very well: be immoveable in your resolution, and become worthy the possession of a virtuous woman." He extended his hand to Rhodolphus. "You must be silent, my son, till the father of Henrietta shall cease to oppose your love. Behold," he added, pointing to the Lieutenant, "he has done more than this. The birth of William destroyed his hopes of happiness, yet has he loved him with the unceasing affection of a father."

Rhodolphus flung himself into the arms of the Lieutenant, and then hastened away to hide the tears he could no longer restrain.

William grasped the hand of the Lieutenant firmly within his own, as they walked homewards. Afterwards, he addressed himself to the Collector. "You assured Rhodolphus," he said, "of another recompense which awaited the performance of his duty, equal to that of the hand

of

of Henrietta. What mysterious sense do those words contain, my father?"

"William, you have described a sacrifice which appears to you the most painful of all sacrifices—To love and be silent. I can name another, scarcely less great—To love and to forget."

"Forget! do you call that a sacrifice?"

"Why not? The flower that an innocent village maiden detaches from her bosom to lay upon the altar, is as much an offering to the Gods, as the hecatomb presented by the hero amidst all the pageantry of pomp."

"Can any but a feeble and inconstant mind forget her whom he once has loved?"

"You, my son, have fallen into an error very common to youth. You take misfortune for enjoyment, while your inflamed imaginations contemplating only the grandeur or the courage with which you endure sufferings, resists the better understanding that would teach you how to subdue them. We cannot, we ought

not

not in truth, to sympathise with the eternal weeper; and this, if it adds nothing in your idea to the elevation of man, proves at least, the beneficence of the Divine Being. Perhaps it cannot be denied, that men are but children of a larger growth; but they are formed to be happy children. Learn, my son, that virtue is the only strength of man, and that forgetfulness is the healing balm sent by Providence for the cure of our calamities."

"Forget her who is beloved! my father. Forget! Never, never!" cried William with fervor.

"I once said so—at your age, my son, I believed the same. I have since learned to value that goodness of the divine will, which bestows on us the noble pride of resisting the evils that would destroy our happiness. Love itself may be subdued, my son. I have insisted less on this point with Rhodolphus, because in the present agitated state of his heart, he would not have wished to believe me, but age and experience will bring the conviction, that

precept

precept might have vainly attempted to enforce."

M. Bellmann meanwhile, in the indulgence of his wrath, forgot the tender forbearance of paternal affection. He poured on his daughter a torrent of contumelious reproach; he represented her lover as the most contemptible of men, and her love as a debasement of mind that admitted of no palliation. Accustomed heretofore to reason with her and to win her concurrence in his views, by convincing her understanding; he now peremptorily exacted a solemn promise to renounce Rhodolphus for ever.

She obeyed; but it would be difficult to pourtray the indignant sensations that swelled her heart, almost to bursting. She beheld her father only in the light of a tyrant, and herself as humiliated and insulted. She remembered his threats with terror; her confidence in his affection faded away; and dissimulation alone restrained the expression of her wounded pride. Assuming an air of serenity, she

attempted to prove herself blameless; and to convince the Pastor, that chance alone had brought her and Rhodolphus together in the summer-house. Already the Pastor felt that he had carried the expression of his anger too far, and was desirous to retract, without shewing that he repented. He affected to believe the representations of his daughter: he spoke to her in a gentle tone: he even declared, that if she had erred, the fault might partly be attributed to him, as not having sufficiently enumerated and distinguished the mistakes to which the human heart was liable.

Henrietta secretly rejoiced to be so easily acquitted. She feigned a wish to be entirely reconciled to her father; praised the judgement of some of his remarks, raised trifling objections to others, and seeming harmony was restored.

M. Bellmann, in appearing to give faith to her excuses, was not more sincere than Henrietta herself; he was perfectly convinced that her intelligence with Rhodolphus was neither by accident, nor of a

new

new date. Yet in three days, not a vestige of his displeasure could be traced on his brow, nor in his deportment to his daughter.

"My dear child," he said, "your manner delights me. I have restored you my entire confidence." Nevertheless he fastened a padlock on the summer-house door, and carefully repaired all the breaches in the garden wall. His windows were regularly closed before the approach of evening; and a bed was placed for Henrietta in a closet within the chamber her mother occupied.

Henrietta remained at ease amidst these precautions, relying on the address and invention of Rhodolphus for the renewal of their interviews. A considerable time passed and his ingenuity and address had yet gained nothing; she then herself contrived a means, and a signal which he could not fail to understand. The signal was disregarded, and the opportunity thrown away. Her chagrin was infinite; in one moment she exclaimed against his infidelity,

infidelity, and the next, formed twenty excuses for him. Her father had represented love as an airy sprite, ever on the wing; but her charms were worthy to fix him for ever, and Rhodolphus had said in the most convincing manner imaginable, that his love would last for ever. To doubt Rhodolphus, was to deny her own attractions. No creed was ever more sincerely maintained than her faith in Rhodolphus, but as their separation prolonged itself, she was miserable with the excess of her love, and her apprehensions for his safety; yet time, and her own light and thoughtless disposition overcame both. "My father was right," she said, "and I am but too easily influenced."

Her heart no longer palpitated at the name of Rhodolphus. Solitude and idleness sometimes made her melancholy, and then she suddenly believed herself much in love, but prudently resolved to oppose the lurking foe with the arms of reason. "Nature," she said, "commands that we love some man; chance decides who the man

must be. If reason disapproves of the choice of the heart, absence, employment, and dissipation must extinguish the passion. I think I need have no apprehensions; I will recall and remain mistress of my own heart as long as I think proper."

Henrietta still occasionally discoursed with her father on the topic of love; but his arguments, and the flattery with which they were mingled, confirmed the bent of her disposition towards coquetry. She longed to subdue all hearts, and grew dissatisfied with the little village where her triumphs were so bounded.

Rhodolphus preserved the ardour of his love, while he trode the path of duty. With indefatigable application he pursued his studies, and even surpassed William. The Collector never gave them his aid but on difficult points of science; they laboured in a different track from that of most young men; were more original in their conclusions, and Rhodolphus was thoroughly prepared to receive the utmost

benefits that a course of study at the university could bestow.

Towards the end of the year, during which Rhodolphus had faithfully separated himself from Henrietta, William remarked that her remembrance was less fondly cherished by his friend. Henrietta no longer held the first place in his projects. He even allowed himself to doubt whether his labours would ever be crowned with success, whether the Pastor would ever yield him her hand. He calculated the difference of their ages, enumerated old difficulties, and discovered new obstacles. In short, he spoke of her to William as often as before, but not with the same ardour.

Fifteen days before his intended departure for the university, Rhodolphus accompanied William on horseback to an annual *fête*, given by the lord of the manor, at which it was customary to shoot at a target for a prize. Entering the parlour of the auberge, Rhodolphus perceiv-

ed

ed Henrietta and her father. He was extremely agitated; a year had passed since they had met, and he trembled on beholding her. Her stature was heightened, her shape formed, her dress more studied and becoming; and his love for her revived with more vehemence than ever. He anxiously wished for an opportunity of speaking to her alone, resolving to declare all the returning ardour of his passion. M. Bellmann looked at his daughter with a slight degree of distrust, but when he saw that she smiled with perfect composure, he spoke with unusual kindness to both the young men; asked Rhodolphus when he departed for the university, and promised him letters of recommendation. Rhodolphus was intoxicated with sensations of pleasure, Henrietta addressing him at first in a manner that appeared exceedingly flattering. All his hopes revived with new force: he indulged in a dream of happiness. He concluded that Bellmann had changed his sentiments; forgiving the past, and forming the design of

 having

having him for a son in law. But on further reflection, he thought Henrietta cold and altogether changed; she, indeed, retained her usual pleasing manners, but a reserve ill disguised, appeared through the whole of her words and actions. He was still willing to attribute this to her father's presence, and his eyes brightened with joy when the Pastor accidentally left the room, but Henrietta maintained her cold and polite stile. He felt an embarrassment which increased at every moment; while Henrietta grew every instant more gay, and more attentive to some of her acquaintance, who happened to be in the room.

In the evening there was a ball, and Rhodolphus, after a great deal of fear and hesitation, at length asked Henrietta to dance with him. She consented with the same cold air, and it was with difficulty that he persuaded himself to take her beautiful hand. His heart beat with increased agitation, while he endeavoured to devise the means of speaking to her alone. A cir-

A circumstance presented him with the occasion he so earnestly sought; a young lady requested Henrietta to accompany her into the garden. A young man offered his arm to Henrietta's friend. The Pastor was at that moment in an adjoining room. Rhodolphus hesitated, but his looks expressed his wishes. Henrietta in a lively manner took his arm, which he had not courage to offer; shortly after they were in the garden, their companions stopt to wait for another part of the company, and Rhodolphus was alone with Henrietta.

This was the moment he had sought. His cheeks were suffused with a deep red, his pulse beat with violence, but Henrietta conversed with him with such perfect indifference, that he dared not open his mouth on the subject which filled all his soul. At length he ventured to reproach her with her coldness, and she answered with no less indifference than before. His presence of mind entirely forsook him, his eye was fixed on her with the most abject

abject melancholy, yet Henrietta continued to converse with her former tranquillity. A cold trembling seized his limbs, and he was glad to conduct her back to the dancing room.

"All my hopes are fled," he whispered to his friend William; after which he withdrew, and sat down in a distant corner of the room.

Henrietta danced with another partner. Rhodolphus, when the dance was finished, again asked her hand; "I did not know that you were still here," she said, carelessly giving him her hand.

"There is no more hope," again said Rhodolphus to William. "Inconstant Henrietta!"

"Rhodolphus," cried William, "are you less inconstant?"

Henrietta had not been altogether so tranquil as her manner indicated; she had been extremely agitated at the sight of her former lover, but perceiving her father observe her with a scrutinizing look, she gave him to understand by her conduct

that

that he had nothing to fear. She soon recovered from her first emotion, and knew perfectly well how to dissemble.

The embarrassment and timidity of Rhodolphus, gave her time to put her arts in practice; she wished to convince her father that she had profited by his lessons. To see that Rhodolphus still loved her, was a triumph to her vanity, but the deceiving her father was no less so. The Pastor said to her, "I am extremely delighted, my love, with your polite and proper conduct to this young man." To retain these praises, she was willing enough to make a cruel sport of her lover's anguish.

It was not without extreme pain that she beheld Rhodolphus depart, in the firm persuasion of her indifference. Her utmost tenderness then revived, she shed tears and bitterly reproached herself for the cruelty of her conduct. Her greatest wish was to see him once again before he left the village, that she might give him some proof that her indifference was but assumed.

 Her

Her wish was fulfilled. Fifteen days after the fête, Rhodolphus presented himself at the door of the Pastor, to bid farewell to M. Bellmann and his family. He entered with a calm and serene air, and his conversation was maintained with ease and even vivacity.

His coldness restored to Henrietta all her courage, but this time her triumph was not so visible as before, for Rhodolphus feeling he could not long support the part he assumed, made his bow, and withdrew.

Henrietta left alone, recalled to her mind the happy instants she had formerly passed with Rhodolphus when he was the most tender and animated of lovers. "It is all at an end!" she exclaimed with a sigh. "Ah, shall I ever again know such happiness!"

CHAPTER XIII.

THE DEPARTURE.

TWO days previous to that on which Rhodolphus was to commence his journey, he was led by William to the tomb of the Countess Elizabeth.

" It was here, my friend," said William, " that we formed a union, which has since been the chief happiness of my life, and here, before we separate, ought we to swear an eternal friendship. When I reflect on the instability of human events, I confess to you, my dear Rhodolphus, a fear springs up in my breast, and at the idea it presents I shudder. If absence can make thee forget me——?"

" William, chace far from us, I beseech thee, these gloomy presages. Why mark with bitterness and alarm the last few moments we can spend together? I forget thee? Never. We will live and die friends! let us bear about us a seal which cannot be effaced, of our resolution."

 " What

"What seal, my friend!"

"Imprint with gunpowder, on my arm, a W!—I will, by the same means, imprint on thine an R!—May our friendship be yet more durable than these signs!"

Before the tomb of the countess the operation was performed: they then embraced, and shed a torrent of tears, in each other's arms. "Let us imitate, my friend," said William, pointing to the statue, "her courage and her virtue!" They quitted the chapel.

It was on the evening of that day that Rhodolphus visited M. Bellmann. From thence he returned to the Collector's, and said to William, "I shall think no more of Henrietta."

"Do you speak seriously?" asked William, vehemently.

Rhodolphus confirmed it with the most solemn assurances.

The young friends passed the night together; and early on the following morning Rhodolphus took his leave of his benefactors, the Collector and Lieutenant.

The

The latter presented him a purse, in consideration of his attachment to William. The Collector was extremely moved, and, while he pressed his hand affectionately, said, "I will give you one more piece of advice:—Gain as much wit as it pleases you; but guard with zeal the purity of your heart: be moderate and condescending, whether you are right or wrong, in your argument, not from fear, but from tolerance to the weakness of others; then you may enjoy favour among men. Never undertake a thing of which you have not well considered the end. I have no better counsel to give you: the rest we must leave to Heaven."

CHAPTER XIV.

A RUSSIAN BALANCE.

ON the anniversary of the Lieutenant's birth-day, which happened two days after the departure of Rhodolphus, the Collector received a letter. In his accustomed manner, he some moments attentively regarded the superscription, considering from whom and whence it came. "I know this writing," said he to the Lieutenant, "yet cannot I call to mind whose it is: I would swear that I had received a thousand letters from the same hand, so familiar does it seem to my eye, but——"

He looked on the seal, changed colour, and was about to break it with precipitation: yet he stopped, laid the letter on the table before him, where it remained unopened. The Collector then falling back in his chair, continued silent and agitated.

The

The Lieutenant fixed his eyes alternately on the letter and his brother. " What can its contents be?" he said with a smile; " they cannot announce any misfortune!"

" That is what I dare not affirm," said the Collector, breaking the seal.

He ran over the letter with a rapid eye, slowly folded it again, and said in a suppressed voice, " I know the contents! The details, the thorns it includes, I must press to my bleeding heart to-morrow. Too much of anguish for this day! I wish this letter had arrived a day later; for, brother," he added with great emotion, " a burning hand is placed upon my bosom."

The Lieutenant rose, saying, " Brother, I hope your alarms are too precipitate."

" Once more, brother, I wish this letter had arrived a day later; for now I must give this day, in part, to sorrow."

" Brother, I know you well! From your youth, your imagination has been accustomed to paint with too much vivacity,

city, even when the subject was a trifle. But although this were an affair of the utmost importance, I thank God that the letter arrived to-day. This day may be your last, and then you will still have time to leave me the legacy and comfort of one more of your good actions."

"Ah! my brother! if you are not unwilling to hear me, I would unburthen my heart by the relation of a crime."

"It is with God and your conscience that you must unburthen your heart: human frailty is too severe, and the severity of a brother would be doubly painful to you."

"You, brother! you severe, in sitting in judgment upon me! Do not I see your tears flowing while you speak? Do not restrain them."

"My heart would be broken if I heard you seriously reproach yourself with a crime! I do not feel it possible to reconcile my feelings, which run different ways! Do not proceed further!"

"I will consider of that, brother. But your

your friendly counsel may be necessary to my wounds, to-morrow—to-morrow."

The next morning, during breakfast, the Lieutenant recounted to William many of his brother's good actions; and, as he concluded each anecdote, said to the Collector, "I take yourself to witness for the truth of this."

"Hem!" replied the Collector, "this is like an advocate who defends a malefactor, bringing in evidence all the good actions of his life, and endeavouring to exaggerate their value."

The Lieutenant continued his eulogium until Madame Rautenbach quitted them, to attend to the cares of her household, and William had gone out on horseback; when the Collector said, "After the sumptuous habits in which you have clothed me, how will you endure the rags I must now appear in before you?"

"As a gala suit. I declare to you, my dear Frederic, I have not closed my eyes this night. I have run through the career of your life, and I am astonished to find

find there is so little to blame, when I consider your ardent and vehement character."

"Suffer me to begin," said the Collector.

"Do you recal to mind, brother, the day I presented myself to you at Minden? we had not seen each other for six years!"

"Do I? oh, yes; it was one of the happiest moments of my life; that, when you entered my chamber, and flew into my arms.—I cannot forget such scenes!"

"Do you remember, also, that you compelled me to take your purse, although I had money of my own? Leaving your quarters, I know not what star conducted me to the baths of G——. My figure was then tolerably good; my height was five feet ten inches; and——"

"Brother, I remember you, and also, when we were walking together, how the women used to turn to take a second view of you."

"When I arrived at the baths, it was the commencement of the season: there

were

were not, as yet, many strangers, and I occupied myself, during some days, with strolling about the public walks. I met with an Italian; he obliged me to dine with him. I found the table surrounded with monks, officers, and noblemen; and among the rest, an Italian girl, daughter to the manager of the theatre. She was pretty, and her charms were displayed to the utmost advantage by the taste and propriety of her dress. She affected, in her manners, an unrestrained liberty of thinking and speaking, that I had never seen in a woman before.

"I found myself, for the first time, among men of rank, and of a certain air of fashion; and I was considerably embarrassed for a time; but my gay and careless humour returned to me, and I sustained my part with ease and discretion. After dinner we were entertained with music and play. This mode of life, so new to me, and above all, the society of the charming Italian girl, pleased me infinitely: some cavaliers did me the favour

to assure me, they had never seen a man of so refined a wit and agreeable humour as myself.

"A young count invited all the society to a fête to be given the next day; and I was one of the first persons to whom he addressed himself, because the Signora (I forget her name) testified so lively a complaisance for me during the whole of the evening. She appointed her lover and me to conduct her to the fête, at a certain hour, on the following day. I was punctual to a moment, and accompanied her to the *promenade*, which drew all eyes upon me; for this Signora was accustomed never to take the arm but of young men of the first quality, or who made the most brilliant display of their wealth.

"We passed the day at a country-house not far from the city, where we sang, laughed, danced, and played. I uttered a number of fine things, which appeared to me extremely witty, and the Signora repeated, at least a hundred times, that I was very amiable.

"Her

"Her avowed lover entertained some jealousy, but I assumed a fierce and martial air, which intimidated him. The Signora after this gathered some flowers. "I would know," said she, holding up the flowers, "who among you is a true knight. Let these be the reward of the conqueror!" Presently we all began to fence, and the rest were for the most part disarmed by me.

"We returned to the baths amidst shouts of joy. These things, as happens to most young people I suppose, were very bewitching to me."

"I hope, brother, that you only found it so for a very short period."

"Yes; when a few years had passed over my head, I viewed them with a different eye; but at the time of which I speak, I certainly delivered myself very promptly to their attractions.

"The Signora, as a stranger, an actress, and a beauty, made a great deal of noise. It was remarked, that she distinguished me above all her admirers; constantly

taking

taking my arm when she went to drink the waters. I was looked upon as her declared lover, and consequently as very rich. They did me the honour to make secret inquiries into my condition at my lodgings. The landlord was no better informed, in reality, than the inquirers; but seeing sometimes a count, and sometimes a baron making me visits, and my dignity also redounding to his honour, he assured them I was noble, and created me baron of Rautenbach.

"I was now a baron every where, and I suffered them to remain in their error."

The Lieutenant struck the calf of his leg as if bit by a fly, that he might avoid looking at his brother.

"I twice joined in parties of high play, and won a considerable sum of money. I suppose they permitted me to win at first, that they might afterwards despoil me of greater treasures."

"These cursed flies! how they torment me," said the Lieutenant; "I believe I must smoke." And he filled his pipe.

"Smoke,

"Smoke, brother! Presently flies will come about you, that even your pipe will not drive away.

"I was now rich enough to support my expences at the baths for a considerable time longer. The Signora soon knew that I was not a nobleman, for she directly asked me the rank of my father. You know, brother, I could not tell a lie.

"My frankness on this occasion made the Signora smile. She affected to regard my confusion as a proof of my confidence in her. Perhaps she secretly believed I was still imposing on her.

"One day the Signora pressed my hand, and looking at me with a peculiar expression, said, "My dear friend, I now can divine who you really are." From that moment she began to trust me with her secrets; she, at the same time, kept mine; she was very careful not to betray that I was no baron. I perceived that she took me to be an adventurer, but that gave me no uneasiness."

"Hum! hum!" murmured the Lieutenant,

tenant, "to be sure, brother, you were very young."

"She permitted me to visit her as often as I pleased, and favoured me with constant intimations that she would advance my plans, on condition that I would return her the like service. At length she opened the whole of her abominable projects.—She designed to plunder a rich man lately arrived at the baths, and I was to be the principal actor in the iniquitous scene. I could not restrain the vehemence of my indignation, and broke with her entirely."

"God be praised! brother," said the Lieutenant; "I have been on thorns."

"My triumph," continued the Collector, "was to humiliate her. Our rupture took place at a moment when a large party surrounded us, and I did not spare my reproaches. Numberless reports took their rise from this event. One said, that I came to the baths purposely to avenge the cause of a betrayed friend upon this woman, and had succeeded to entrap her

in

in her own snares: some accused me of jealousy; and some of a caprice that had tempted me to abandon her. The Signora on her part loudly denounced me as a gambler—a beggar—a lacquey. All this was laughed at, for I never played—never borrowed money, or incurred debts—and in conversation, displayed attainments that could not have come within the scope of a footman's education. It was allowed that I affected some mystery, but they gave me credit for very good reasons, and I was admitted into parties where I had never shewn myself during my connection with the Signora.

"One day I repaired to a public garden, newly embellished and ornamented for the amusement of the company at the baths. It was the first time of these gardens being open to the public, and numbers of persons were attracted thither. At the lower end of the garden, I perceived a crowd of young persons surrounding a large machine of a peculiar construction, whose use I could not divine. I approached

approached to examine it nearer, and perceiving the master of the garden there, he informed me it was a Russian Balance.

"How is it put in motion?" said a voice behind me, whose sweetness of tone almost thrilled me. I turned round and beheld a young lady of an elegant and majestic figure, whose piercing glances penetrated to my very soul. I did not hear one syllable of the long harangue made by the master of the balance, to explain to us its nature and design. I was occupied only with gazing on her, while she watched the progress of the balance, which was now moving. Perhaps, brother, you are not acquainted with this machine, which forms the principal holiday amusement of the Russian citizens. It is a large wheel of twenty or thirty feet diameter, from which are suspended four arm chairs: these chairs alternately ascend and descend as the wheel turns round, with a swift and easy motion. The machine was unknown here, and no one dared venture to essay it. The owner began to appear exceedingly

ceedingly disconcerted, when all his oratory failed to prevail on any of the surrounding crowd to make the trial of the balance, from which he had expected to draw a considerable profit; and stepping up to me, he said, " Will not M. Rautenbach be so condescending as to try the balance?"

" If a lady will accompany me," I answered, still keeping my eyes fixed on the lovely face before me. She smiled and said, " I believe there is no danger."

" There is no danger," I echoed; and taking her hand, placed her in an arm chair, and seated myself in another. The master detained us with reiterated assurances of our safety. " I am convinced of it," she said, " I am quite satisfied—pray begin." The wheel turned, and the garden rang with shouts of applause.

" What children we are, brother! Applause is the most delightful of our pleasures. When I was at the top of the wheel, I leaned over the back of my seat to look at my companion. She observed

me, and smiled upon me. "How tantalizing!" I exclaimed. "When you ascend, I descend; always in motion, yet never approaching."

"Catch that," she cried, tossing a rose towards me. I dexterously caught it in my hand, and touched it with my lips.

"We continued our exercise till she desired to be released. Encouraged by our example, every one was now eager to ascend, the balance was constantly in motion, and cries of joy resounded on every side. The young lady and I retired to a little distance, and continued to watch the progress of the wheel. "Always so near each other," I said, "yet so eternally asunder. It is but an emblem of life. The best of mankind are often thus fixed by fortune, at a distance from each other, till the wheel of life stands still!"

"Well," she replied, "we must be content. Yet they do sometimes meet," she said, "and always understand each other. A look, a smile, or a rapid and short sentence, is enough."

"As

"As she ceased to speak, we were again summoned to the balance. Three couple already occupied three chairs, and they entreated us to take the fourth. I looked at my companion. "The chair is very narrow," she said.

"That is true," I replied, "and if the path of life is the same, it is not the less desirable to tread." Her smile accorded me permission to lead her to the chair. As soon as we were seated and the balance began its motion, I encircled her waist with my arm. The wheel stood still too soon. I could not forbear saying to her as we descended from the chair, "Methought I held you strictly embraced till the wheel of life stood still." She looked at me and blushed, but I could not read on her countenance either approbation or displeasure. She now joined a middle-aged female, who received her with a profound and respectful courtesy; I then quitted her. Shortly after, as I passed by, she said, "We are forming a party for *carousal*, will you make one?" I took her

hand and led her to the table. She was unacquainted with the game, yet the ring was almost always hers, she had so just an eye, and so firm a hand.

"I remained close to her, and when she gave up her chair to another player, I accompanied her to a remote part of the garden. We rallied each other on the manner of our introduction. She took every thing I said in good part, displayed a lively imagination, quick judgment; and we separated, promising to meet again in the same place.

"There were a number of pretty women at that time at the baths of G—, but no one had ever made on me so deep an impression as this stranger.

"On the following day, I saw her among the persons who came at a certain hour to drink the waters. I was become timid, and dared not approach her. She at length perceived, and beckoned me towards her. "This crowd," said she, "is like the pleasures of the world—at a distance all appear charming; mix with them,

them, and you look round in vain for their attractions."

"We prolonged our conversation—talked of society, of manners, and of friendship. We entered at once into the familiarity of an intercourse of years. During three days we saw each other continually on the public walks, where once we met the Signora.

"The stranger was struck with her beauty, and demanded if I knew her. I repeated her name.

"Is that the Signora!" she exclaimed with vivacity. "Oh! then you know her very well. Yesterday some one related to me a particular adventure of yours. Is it not said that you were very intimately connected with her? If you deem my question indiscreet, I pray you forget it?"

"For my part, brother," said the Lieutenant, "I think it was very indiscreet; a young girl ought not to ask such questions."

"Yes she might, brother," said the Collector, "much depends on the manner."

 "Nothing,

"Nothing, I answered to the stranger, was more natural than my intimacy with the Signora. I often met her in a society where there was no other woman, and though her manners were free, even to levity, she knew how to assume a dignity that could restrain the most enterprising man. In recalling the impression she made on me, I find it was by that confidence she seemed to possess in her own strength."

"Men are accustomed, I think, to call that confidence want of delicacy. Surely, that is the greatest defect of woman."

"The observation is just, brother," said the Lieutenant, "very just. What was your reply?"

"I said, that although the want of delicacy might be the greatest reproach of woman, yet I would not have weakness and the absence of a decided character to be confounded with true delicacy. "Be it what it will," I added, "that attracted me towards the Signora, I must continue to believe, that innocence is always courageous."

"My

"My unknown one smiled: "And who undeceived you on the Signora's behalf?" she asked.

"Her innocence, I replied, had no connection with her thoughts, it only served her as a means to make dupes. That appears to me the greatest want of delicacy."

"How!" she replied, "I do not quite understand you?"

"She adopts different modes to impress different characters. The homage of one man would not suffice her, she must subdue all—she is a coquet, and that is the greatest want of delicacy that can belong to a woman."

"And is the same conduct among men to be termed want of delicacy? for there are many coquets also to be found among your sex."

"Be they punished with the contempt of every virtuous woman, and every honest man!"

"Let me hear your definition of true delicacy; where shall we find it?"

"Warmed with my subject, I had cou-

rage to reply, "In the heart of a faithful wife! in the breast of a tender mother!" I was on the point of folding her in my arms, and exclaiming—In thy heart, adorable girl! for we were walking, brother, in a thick wood. No human footstep approached. We exhaled the sweets of a thousand perfumes, and we heard the melodious chant of the nightingale from among the branches that formed a luxuriant canopy over our heads.

"We left the shade of the wood, and climbed a hill, where we seated ourselves to view an enchanting prospect, while I gathered wild roses to adorn her hair.

"We now talked of our characters—of our education—of our modes of thinking. We found every where coincidence and sympathy."

"Nevertheless," said she, "I cannot have excited much interest in your mind, for you have not even inquired my name."

"I blushed—in truth I had never thought of her name."

"Is it not extraordinary," she added with

with a smile! "For my part I am much more occupied about my friends than you appear to be; I know already that you are called Rautenbach."

"I was embarrassed. "It is indeed singular," I said after a pause. "I not only have forgot to inquire your name, but if you will permit me to call you cousin, I shall not feel that you want any other appellation."

"You shall hear my name however, my dear cousin; I am called Antonia."

"I pressed her hand to my lips. Willingly would I have thrown myself at her feet, to thank her with transports of gratitude, for having allowed me to call her my dear cousin Antonia.

"On that day I was permitted to escort her home, where she presented to me, under the title of her aunt, the elderly female I had seen accost her in the public garden.

"I could not long forbear to remark a strange peculiarity which attended the intercourse of Antonia with her aunt; the latter never displayed any of the charac-

teristic endearments of a near female relation, who occupied the place of a mother; on the contrary, she was even more humble than respectful, and her manner might very well be taken for that of an inferior domestic towards her mistress. Antonia appeared to struggle to compel her to maintain the dignity of her proper station, and to hide from my penetration her aunt's deficiencies."

"I fear, brother, you fell into the hands of a second signora, yet more dangerous than the first."

"There were moments, brother, when I entertained the same suspicion; but when I again beheld Antonia—when I read the expression of candour and innocence indelibly impressed on her countenance, I abjured the thought. Yet, by other circumstances, I became convinced that woman was not, in reality, the aunt of Antonia, though I divined nothing further."

"Nothing further, brother! I know very little of the world, yet methinks I can divine what this woman was. Brother, your recital makes me shudder."

"Antonia

"Antonia never questioned me on my condition in life. She continued to call me her cousin. I was not so passive respecting my cousin: I one day found the aunt alone, and endeavoured to draw her into conversation: her embarrassment betrayed her own secret; but I learned nothing of Antonia."

"Brother! God forgive me! could you not see—did you not think?———"

"I thought of every thing, my dear brother. But what design could she possibly have on me? a poor young man who, perhaps, it was said, gained a livelihood by play!"

"They thought you rich, brother. They took you for a baron."

"No, brother: the aunt and the niece knew I was not rich.

"Antonia, as I have already said, was beautiful. She was followed by the young men of the first quality, but received their homage with the utmost coldness. I watched her without ceasing, and though the mystery which veiled her situ-

ation could not be penetrated, I was convinced of her purity. Innocence may be tolerably well assumed for a day, but during four weeks, all eyes upon her, the men adoring, the women envying her, yet always without taint; frank, generous, unassuming; consoling the afflicted, delighting her equals—in brief, brother, she was an angel in the human form! Those were the happiest hours of my life. I cannot retrace them without emotion. One month had thus glided away, when she began to speak of her departure.

" At length the day was fixed in my presence. She said, " Our separation will cause me some pain." I would have spoken, but I only possessed the will; and power was denied me. I secretly resolved to open my heart to her before she left me.

" On the evening previous to the fatal day, we went out to walk. Chance conducted us to the balance.

" Here," said she, " we first met."

" The wheel, at that moment, stood still;

still; two young girls leaped from the chair; we hastened to take their places, and were presently in motion. She looked on me with tenderness—" Here let us bid each other adieu!"

" Ah, Antonia! you would say adieu!" I exclaimed. " Why cannot I hold you thus eternally embraced? Never would this arm cease to protect—never would this heart cease to beat for you."

" She turned to me and repeated "never!"

" Never!" I replied with an impressive voice.

" Never, is a word," she said, " that ought not to be pronounced by a man, after the maturest reflection. Amidst many sorrows, I have learned to know, that scarcely does woman begin to experience the pleasures of love, ere she sees her constant affection disdained, and in the chains of an unhappy marriage she is bound a slave till death."

" I do not understand you, Antonia. All my faculties are absorbed in the dread

of

of losing you. Depart from me, and my felicity is at an end."

"She continued silent, but eagerly pressed my hand: a tear stole down her cheek. When we had descended, she said to me, "And if I loved you, might you not some time or other abandon me?"

"Ah! Antonia," I replied, "if you loved me——if I could only hope to gain your love, I would rather dwell with you in the humblest cottage, than with another in a splendid palace."

"I do love you, Rautenbach," she said with an expression that I cannot describe, "I love you ardently! and even were you to abandon me, you would never cease to be the object of my affection; yet I have a severe punishment in reserve if you deceive me."

"During this conversation we had gained the fields. She imperceptibly conducted me towards a small wood, which, at that season of the year, was little frequented. I would have thrown myself at her feet, but perceiving my intention, she

prevented that, and said with a manner unusually solemn, "The most important event of the life of each, should not be influenced by any deceitful appearances. It is this very instant which irrevocably decides the colour of our fate. Examine your heart steadily; is it not possible that you may one day cease to be just to me? for your love may cease. Should that ever happen, we ought in that very moment to separate. You love me, but on what is your passion founded? On what am I to calculate its duration? Be frank—Be generous—Speak to me."

"I then avowed to her the passion which I had conceived on first seeing her. I declared, that I found this passion afterwards sanctioned by esteem; and that to change my sentiments, I must cease to love whatever was beautiful and good."

"I would fain be tranquil," she replied, shedding tears, "but my heart is too much agitated. Rautenbach, I know how transitory love usually is. In loving you, I confide my entire happiness to your keeping.

keeping. I repose in your honour. I love you to a degree altogether inexpressible. Wretched must I be if you deceive me."

"If I deceive you!"—I raised my clasped hands to heaven—"May all consolation, all hope for ever abandon me!—Antonia———"

"She eagerly interrupted me: "No more! forbear those oaths! If your heart should deceive itself, these oaths will only bring you greater sorrows. Leave me to myself for a while."

"She walked for some time in much agitation, then returning to me with a blush, in a low voice she repeated again the confession of her love. I embraced her. Ah! dear brother, in nature nothing equals the first kiss of a pure and innocent love! My bosom was rent with the storm of passion; my soul was consumed with torrents of fire. From this tempest of passion, my mind subsided into a celestial calm. I could have wished that that had been my last moment."

"I," said the Lieutenant, "was still

very

very young when I felt the same sensations. Even the remembrance of them is still delightful to me. If we already enjoy such happiness in this perishable life, how indescribably great must be the bliss which awaits us in a better! Go on with your history, brother."

"We were mutually transported with joy. Raising our eyes and hands toward heaven, we swore an eternal love. Some persons approaching, we took another path of the wood."

"You love me, then?"

"Can you doubt me? I replied."

"I do not; but pardon the follies of love. You are willing to be ever mine?"

"While this heart shall beat."

"You consent to partake of my fate, whatever it is?"

"I hesitated. Fierce as my wishes were, it was not possible the question should not make me reflect. I knew not who she was, was ignorant even of the name of her family. You will see, brother,

ther, that it was very natural I should not instantly answer.

"She regarded me with emotions of pride and anger. With a dignified air, she said, "Rautenbach, I would not receive your unreflected promise of faith. Consider what it is that I have demanded."

"Antonia, if you were to live in a desert, I would dwell with you; but—— may I know———"

"I understand; but I am thy mistress, thou shalt call me so. Need I another name with thee?"

"Antonia, although I should never learn the name of your family, I swear to be thine! eternally thine! But I am poor. My mother still lives. I possess nothing but this heart, these hands, and my courage. Yet——let me own——I know not what fear agitates me."

"You tremble! you tremble to be mine!"

"Antonia, I am yours, and will be ever so: wherever you go I will go with you. All

All climates are indifferent to me, and all occupations. Make what demand you will of me, and if I hesitate a single moment, if I feel the sacrifice too painful, if any labour be too humble for me, turn those eyes for ever from me. I am yours, and yours for ever. But tell me who you are, and what you require of me."

"I am poor like thyself; but I can be content with little. In possessing nothing but thy heart, I am more rich than the wife of the greatest monarch. But I am compelled to live in obscurity. I have renounced my country, and the world. I demand that sacrifice of thee."

" No, Antonia! no," I cried, "I cannot make the sacrifice. It depends not on me to do this. My mother and my brother know that I live. I should be a monster to give them such inquietude. Ah! could I plunge them into so dreadful a doubt of my fate?"

"Frederic," interrupted the Lieutenant, "I should have died with grief! I was enough

enough borne down by not knowing where you were!"

"She replied to me disdainfully, "And thy mother and thy brother are dearer to thee than I am?"

"Antonia, I love you above the whole world—I love you with a vehemence of which I did not know my heart to be capable; yet I also love my mother and my brother. No person shall ever shed tears on my account."

"No person except Antonia!—I am compelled to demand this sacrifice. Make it, or we see each other for the last time. Reflect and answer me."

"Brother, I felt that I was choosing between happiness and misery; but I did not hesitate. How could I resolve to cause inquietude to you and my mother? "Antonia," I resolutely answered, "never shall any one know from me who you are, where you live, that you are known to me, or that I love you: but if you do really demand that I sacrifice my parent and

and brother to your love, then—we do see each other for the last time."

" She looked at me with a smile, and said, " Will you do nothing to save me from misery ?"

" Why will you not try me otherwise than in this fatal way ?"

" Well, you shall write to your friends that you live, you shall even go to see them from time to time ; but you shall conceal for ever, the place where we live, and my name."

" I no longer hesitate, I promise you I will."

" I quit this place," she continued, " on the morrow. We will see each other again this evening ; and in eight days from this, on the 3d of August, repair to Cassel, *to the White Rock, in the Giant's octagon Hall*—at three o'clock in the afternoon : do not forget."

" In the evening I went to her dwelling, and found her aunt busy in packing up. " Well," said Antonia smiling, " I began

began already to think that you had forgotten us."

"She spoke of her departure with much gaiety. She appeared to me to be unusually cheerful. At length she made me a sign to take my leave, which I did; but I had scarcely quitted her, when the sudden dread that I had seen her for the last time, gave me such anguish that I could not endure my sensations. I sought relief in company, but there anxiety was my only companion.

"At midnight I passed before Antonia's dwelling. The silence was broken by a charming voice, unknown to me, accompanied by an instrument. Each verse of the song concluded with this burthen,

Doris forgets me, perhaps for ever!

I could not clearly distinguish whether these sounds came from Antonia's, or an adjoining house. The words, however, appeared to me a species of prediction, and renewed all my inquietude. Fain would

I have

I have entered Antonia's dwelling, never more to quit her. In this painful state, my resolution continually fluctuating, I remained before the gate till two in the morning.

"I then ordered a horse to be saddled, and before the rising of the sun I was on my road to Cassel. I expected to be overtaken by Antonia's carriage, and when I lost hope of that, I turned back and made inquiries at her house. I learned she had set off some hours before, and had taken the contrary road. I pursued her, but my horse fell and was extremely hurt. I had even much difficulty to lead him to the next village, where I learned that the ladies I was in search of, had quitted their carriage and proceeded post.

"I then thought myself assured of my misery.

"On the first of August I entered Cassel. I went directly to the White Rock, without recollecting that it was not yet the appointed day. I said to myself, Ah, she will never come!

"That

"That she might not instantly know me, if she should keep her word, I wrapt myself up in a horseman's coat, and wore a hat slouched over my shoulders. On the second day I went again to the White Rock. On entering theGiant's hall, I saw a woman dressed like a *femme de chambre*, who retired as soon as she perceived me. I walked on the neighbouring heights. I sighed, while I recollected it was not yet the day. Again I returned to the hall and saw the same woman. She was retreating, but an indefinable curiosity led me to pursue her. It was Antonia, who in that dress looked as lovely as in the most costly garb. I caught her in my arms with rapture. We mutually smiled at our being a day before the time, and at our meeting without knowing each other.

"I did not at first dare to ask her why she had assumed that dress; at length, however, I said, "Your aunt, Antonia—has she quitted you? Why this disguise, and these precautions?"

"Disguise!"

"Disguise!" she answered, "you will henceforth always see me in this dress."

"Still mysterious," I replied. "But your aunt, Antonia?"

"I have no aunt, but I reserve my history for our leisure: at present I would give my whole time to the inexpressible delight of my seeing you again. I feared that I should not find you here. Pardon my suspicions."

"I owned to her, that I had also suspected her. I told her of my being before her house on the night preceding her departure: She replied, "In that song I expressed my own fears."

"She then continued: "At my auberge, I have said that I expect the arrival of my husband, whom I am come to meet. Retain your own name Rautenbach; you are to be a musician of Mayence. To-morrow we will go to the house that I have taken."

"She spoke to me with an air of incredible tranquillity. The idea of the part I had to play at the auberge, gave me ex-

cessive uneasiness, but her manner was as composed as if she had played her part the whole of her life."

"Brother!" exclaimed the Lieutenant with vehemence, "I hope, before the end of the day, you discovered that this woman was a mere adventurer, who had God knows what designs upon you. To take an aunt, dismiss her! disguise herself to pass for the wife of a young man! I should have suspected all that. I foresee that you will sleep in the same chamber—and, brother, you should never forget that you are but a man."

"It is true, dear brother, and I also conceived some such suspicions, when the servant of the auberge came to prepare a second bed for me in the chamber of Antonia. Antonia mean time seated herself at the table, and presented my coffee with all the grace imaginable. While the servant prepared the bed, Antonia frequently addressed me by the name of *husband*,—my virtue hesitated furiously. I imagined her already about to unloose her vestments.

"Antonia

"Antonia went out to make some purchases, and during the two hours that I was left alone, I did not for an instant cease to reflect on this affair; I had nearly the same thoughts as you have expressed, brother. I believed her to be an adventurer, but I had not the least idea of quitting her."

"You ought, brother, to have done it; our deceased father used to say, that there was often more virtue in flight than in resistance."

"Brother, I never could endure this proverb: from a child I loved to face my enemy. In fine, when I felt the temptation to be the most powerful, I rose from my chair and traced a line with my foot between the two beds, and said to myself, I am lost if I pass this line. If instead of this line, there was betwixt us a wall of stone, the virtue of Antonia would be in surety. Well," I added, "my honour, my resolution, my virtue, will be as firm as any wall: man is at once the most timid and courageous of existing creatures."

" Antonia entered the chamber with an air of gaiety, and flew to embrace me; at that moment I trembled a little, but her manner restored my courage.

" While we were at table, and I beheld her white arms, rounded by the Graces, the foundations of my wall tottered; but the mistress of the auberge, a coarse landlady, just then came into the apartment. Till now Antonia had not betrayed the slightest emotion; but the coarse jests of this woman covered her with confusion. My wall acquired more solidity.

" When the landlady departed, Antonia regarded me with a look of embarrassment, and fixing her eyes on the ground, she appeared to meditate. Then raising them to heaven, I saw a tear escape—my wall was as solid as a rock of diamond.

" What is it you fear, Antonia?" I said, " you are with a man of honor." She looked upon me steadfastly, and in a moment her countenance expressed a more confiding tenderness than ever. She came and seated herself upon my knees, laid her

cheek

cheek to mine, and exclaimed, with the accent of a pure and sincere mind: "At length then I am blessed, at length I possess a heart which answers to my own!" I pressed her tenderly in my arms, demanding "who art thou, Antonia? what does all this mean?"

"If I am still silent," she replied, "it is only from a little vanity. I must possess myself of the triumph of knowing that I am beloved for myself alone, then all my secrets will be yours." You should have witnessed, brother, the innocence and sweetness with which she pronounced those words, to have judged of my answer. I placed my hand upon her vermilion lips and said, "I will wait till the instant you have fixed."

"And if," she asked with a smile, "I had formed the project never to speak?"

"Then be for ever silent, what need have I to know more than that you are mine, Antonia?"

"Thus passed the evening. At length I prayed her to go to rest, as she appeared

 greatly

greatly fatigued. She placed herself behind me and began to take off her clothes. I was not once tempted to turn my head. Some minutes afterwards she wished me good night; I extinguished my light and went to bed, but I could not go to sleep.

"The moon shone brightly into the chamber, and her rays fell on the face of Antonia. I raised myself, and contemplated her beauty—I confess to you, brother, my wall was not thicker than a ribbon. Three times I was about to quit my bed to view somewhat nearer, the effect of the clear light upon her charming figure. Every moment I lifted my head to consider her anew; at length I blushed at my weakness, rose, and drew close the window curtains. Now I was not long in falling asleep, nor awoke till the morning was already far advanced."

"Good day, brother," cried the Lieutenant. "Good day with all my heart."

"When I opened my eyes, Antonia was already dressed and seated at the table, occupied with her work. I bid her

good

good morrow. She returned my salutation, and went out to order breakfast. She did not come back to the chamber till she had allowed me sufficient time to dress myself. After remaining a few hours longer at the auberge, we departed for our future residence."

"On the road I fell again into a train of reflections on the mysterious veil which enveloped the proceedings of Antonia. She observed me, and exerted all her vivacity to draw me from my reverie. She was so amiable, so lively and attractive, that my inquietude again gave place to unbounded confidence and pleasure.

"We approached the mountains near Turin, and perceived at a short distance a small and obscure village. Antonia pointed it out, and said, "Behold the place we shall inhabit; God grant that it may become the abode of confidence, of friendship, of justice."

"And not of love?" I asked.

"Yes," she replied. "But will not love

day become extinct? then be just to me, be my friend, and render me happy as I also will render thee."

"We stopped before the entrance of a small habitation, on the south side of which grew a vine, supported by a treillage, while the north was ornamented with the bright leaves of the periwinkle. An old man advanced to meet us, and assisted Antonia to alight from the chaise: he and the other persons in the house appeared to have been expecting our arrival.

"Once more Antonia called me her husband. She took some keys and conducting me up the staircase, opened a chamber furnished with taste and elegance. "This is your apartment," she said; "I bid you welcome to your own property. You are the only man I ever loved, for you have loved me with confidence, and for myself alone."

"I looked around me in amazement. I pressed Antonia in my arms, and vowed a love of never failing confidence.

"She then led me to another chamber, saying,

saying, this is Antonia's; now have I no longer secrets to preserve. My whole life shall be unveiled to you. Allow me to make a few necessary arrangements in the house, when I will return and commence my history.

"She quitted me. You can easily imagine how greatly my curiosity must have been excited, as well by present as past appearances; I looked out of the window and beheld a handsome garden, well laid out, and on the other side a court with poultry, and every convenience of domestic accommodation. I opened another door in my chamber, and entered a cabinet—it communicated with the chamber of Antonia.

"When she returned, my first words were, "Antonia, you call me husband, you call yourself my wife; when shall this happy union take place?"

"When!" she exclaimed sorrowfully, "when! alas it depends not on me: mighty obstacles oppose it."

"Who are you, Antonia? it is time that I learn."

"Let us sit down. I must go back to a distant period, to explain all the motives of my extraordinary conduct towards you. Hear me without interruption."

CHAPTER XV.

HISTORY OF ANTONIA.

"MY mother was descended from an illustrious family, and the heir of an immense fortune. Her hand was solicited by men of the first rank, and the most brilliant prospects; but my grandfather left her at liberty to make her own choice; and having long been secretly devoted to him, she married Monsieur de ———. My friend, I must hide from you the name of my father.

"Within

"Within a year of their union I was born, and this event appeared for a time greatly to augment their happiness; but shortly afterwards an unfortunate accident befel my mother, which bereaved her of the hope of having any more children; and from that hour the conduct of my father towards his wife was wholly changed. The indifference which first manifested itself, soon grew into an absolute and barbarous tyranny. My grandfather had also paid the debt of nature, and the unfeeling husband of his child, no longer restrained by the fear of his displeasure, lived openly with a woman of abandoned character. My mother, whose temper was vehement, and who loved her husband with an excess of affection, passed from remonstrance to reproach: but he, with an insulting smile, declared to her, that he had never loved her person, but through the means of her fortune he had sought to re-establish the dignity of his family, which had fallen into decay. "To this object," he said, "I sacrificed my-

self, and more than myself, I relinquished a woman I loved to madness, and allied myself to one who was odious in my eyes, and who has at last destroyed all my hopes. Had you brought me a son," he added, "I might have kept terms with you."

"My mother demanded a separation; her husband did not find it convenient to relinquish so material a part of her fortune; and a very trifling alteration in his manners towards her, gave her hopes that she should regain his heart by sacrificing her resentment, and burying the past in oblivion. In a very short time he became more despotic, more cruel, and more profligate than before. Again she proposed a separation. "With all my heart," he said, "only observe, Antonia, our child remains with me; I am her father, and no force shall tear her from my protection." Tears, intreaties, threats, were equally unavailing: the law was in his favour, and rather than part with

me,

me, my mother submitted to be the victim of his triumph.

"Her friends and relations loudly exclaimed against her weakness, as they termed it; and finding her immoveably fixed to continue with my father, they testified their displeasure by forbearing all intercourse, equally with the wife as with the husband.

"Delivered up to sorrow and retirement, I became my mother's only consolation. When I grew old enough to understand the nature of her griefs, she told me her history. It made a deep impression on me. Her tears agonised my heart. I used to delight in giving her the most solemn assurances, that I would never marry a man without being first convinced he loved me for myself, and not my fortune.

"I had just attained my fifteenth year, when a nephew of my father's came to make us a visit. The young man sought to win my favour: my father gave me to

understand I was the destined wife of my cousin. But I continued to behold him with the most sovereign contempt. He was a coxcomb and a libertine.

"My mother's constitution had long been sinking under the burthen of her sorrows. She called me one day to her bed-side: "My child," said she, "I feel that I am hastening to the grave. I cannot leave you without the deepest inquietude; yet I hope my sad example will save you from pangs such as I have endured. You will soon have need of all your courage, your father wills you to your cousin; but if you suffer them to complete this marriage, a fate scarcely less wetched than mine awaits you. If you cannot otherwise prevent this union, you must fly. I have provided the means of your escape from tyranny and destruction. Behind that tapestry is a small pannel, press your hand against the bottom with force. I obeyed. It flew back, and discovered a cabinet with drawers. I opened them by

my mother's command, and observed a quantity of gold on one side, and on the other, bank notes to a large amount.

"That drawer," continued my mother, "contains a sufficient sum of money to assure you, in any country, of an easy and independent life; another drawer also contains a ladder of rope, and a complete suit of man's apparel. I had it made for myself, resolving once, in a fit of despair, to fly from the knowledge of all mankind. It is now my consolation that I remained for thee, my child! should these means be thy only refuge to avoid a life of wretchedness and slavery. Support your courage, Antonia, be prepared for every exigence; and above all, make no confident, and bury the name of your family for ever in your heart. If your plans are detected, all the cruelties they will heap on you will be justified in their eyes, and even in the eyes of the world." My mother entered into many other details on the conduct I ought to adopt, and heard me renew my former promises,

never

never to unite myself to a man who would not love me for myself alone. "If," she said, "he hesitates to unite his fate to thine, quit him, he loves thee not, for true love desires only the object. Name, country, occupation, all then are equal. Choose a man who will respect the duties of a husband, a man who, esteeming himself, will know how to esteem you. Promise me this, Antonia, and receive the dying benediction of thy mother, whose last care is to preserve thee from a destiny as unhappy as her own."

"Scarcely had my mother breathed her last sigh, when my father commenced his persecutions, to compel me to give my hand to his nephew. I silenced his first importunities, by alleging, that my grief for my mother would not permit me as yet to think of marriage. I then began assiduously to cultivate the affection of my father, and endured patiently the attentions of my cousin, who now took up his abode with us at my father's castle, and never losing sight of my last resource

against

against this abhorred union, I learned to ride, to hunt; I familiarised myself with every part of the surrounding country; studied geography; and with infinite labour learned the dialect of the Empire, from a huntsman of my father's, who was a German. I questioned this man on the manners and customs of his countrymen. Every thing I did had some relation to my secret plan. Its romantic nature took possession of my imagination, and at length I became so enamoured of my project, that I earnestly longed for the moment when I should be compelled to take my flight. But my father's tenderness for me increased every day, and whenever I was on the point of pronouncing the decisive *no*, my heart relented, and I contented myself with some pretext for further delay.

"I had reached my seventeenth year, when my father was struck with an apoplexy. I was summoned to the side of his bed, with his brother and nephew. My father essayed to speak, but his accents

were no longer intelligible. "Brother," said my uncle, "is it not your wish that Antonia here engages to become the wife of my son?" My father with difficulty pronounced "Yes." "No, my father," I cried, "at this instant I can think of nothing but your sufferings." I threw myself weeping on the bosom of my father. My uncle again spoke of the marriage; but my father, touched with my caresses, only gazed on me with fondness, and extended his hand to me. The physicians entering, I was dismissed to my own apartment. The following night my uncle entered my room; "Antonia," he said, "your father is dying; I conjure you to unite yourself to my son, before his last moment. Come, the Priest waits in your father's chamber." "Sir," I replied, "I will never unite myself to your son." —In that instant the young man rushed in, exclaiming, "My uncle is dead."

"I flew to press the corpse of my parent to my heart. My uncle besought me by the love I had borne my father, to accomplish

plish his last wish. "Come," said he to the Priest, "approach my son, and receive your bride. This union will be acceptable to the shade of my brother, which yet hovers over us." "I know," I replied, "what I owe to the shade of my father; it is tears, and not a marriage." My uncle renewed his entreaties; my cousin promised the most ardent and faithful love; he swore by the manes of my deceased father and mother.—"Your pardon, Sir," I cried: "The soul of my mother rejects your vows, as she ever did." "Niece," said my uncle with severity, "you forget that I am now your guardian." "You may become the guardian of my fortune," I replied, "but that will not give you the disposal of my hand." "I shall occupy the place of your father, and I will maintain his rights." I kissed the cold lips of my parent, and withdrew in silence.

"The will of my father consigned me to the guardianship of my uncle, but no mention was made therein of my espous-

ing

ing my cousin. He had only spoken of the union to his brother."

"Niece," said my uncle, "your father, in his last moments, destined your hand to my son. You do not hesitate to accomplish his dying wishes?"

"I will never marry your son; my mother was the sacrifice of an unhappy marriage; I will not be the same."

"Very well, we can find the means to compel you to obedience."

"Never! I never will be the wife of your son!"

"Some days afterwards my uncle gave orders for the removal of the household. "Perhaps," he said, with a sarcastic smile, "Mademoiselle will prefer remaining here under the care of the old steward?"

"Yes," I replied eagerly, "I will remain here." But when the carriage arrived, he took my hand and compelled me to enter it, although I loudly remonstrated, and called the domestics to witness that an undue authority was enforced upon me.

"When

"When we arrived at the metropolis, the father and son essayed once more to subdue me by entreaties. I was immoveable. My uncle then confined me to my own chamber, and deprived me of my books and musical instruments. I found means to address a complaint against my uncle, to the prime minister, and demanded the appointment of another guardian; one of the ministers friend's was my uncle's relation, and I was assured it could only be done by the commencement of certain forms. My uncle discovered my correspondence, and took my pens and ink away.

"I will fly from your tyranny," I said.

"We will take good care to prevent that, Mademoiselle," was his answer. And deeming his security greater in the country than in the city, I was, on the following day, transported to the chamber of my mother. "Believe me, I will escape," I again repeated to my uncle. He only smiled in derision, while he examined all my effects; he took from me my

money

money and my jewels, and placed over me an old woman on whose fidelity he could entirely rely.

"That night, when my duenna was buried in sleep, I safely unclosed the secret pannel, and put on the garb of a man. Then attaching my rope ladder to the window, I was once more free.

"I proceeded to Frankfort, where I rested some days. From thence I again addressed the minister, saying, that having vainly sought to be protected from a detested marriage, I had no other means but to secrete myself from the power of my uncle, till I was of age. I prayed that some attention might be paid to the preservation of my property, till I was at liberty to revisit my country, and reclaim my fortune.

"I continued my travels, and arrived at Vienna, where I passed for the son of an inhabitant of the Palatinate; and the dialect I had learned, confirmed my assertions.

"I visited Switzerland, and even the Milanese,

Milanese, still in the habit of a man; and at the end of a year, the air and the sun had so tarnished my complexion, that fearless of discovery, I returned to my own country. I continued some days near my uncle's dwelling, and learned that he had still the management of my estates, under the superintendence of a commission appointed to overlook his accounts.

"I returned to Minden, and on the way thither, my dear Rautenbach, I first encountered you. The conversation turned on love, and the sentiments you expressed charmed me. You may remember that when we stopped at the post-house, we were served with coffee by a very pretty girl. I trifled with this girl, who appeared to have no repugnance to listen to either of us. You imagined I had improper views on her, for you manifested a decided horror of all libertinism. I turned the discourse to the subject of marriage and domestic pleasures: you spoke with a holy transport of the dignity of a wife, of a mother, and your sentiments added

strength

strength to the impression your exterior had made on me.

"I quitted the diligence at the next post, having first carefully informed myself of the course of your travels.

"This is the man," said I, "who will love me for myself." I resumed my female attire, and followed you to the baths, taking with me the woman whom I announced to you as my aunt. The rest, dear Rautenbach, you already know."

CHAPTER XVI.

CONTINUATION OF THE COLLECTOR'S STORY.

THE Collector now made a long pause. "Whatever can excuse this young woman," said the Lieutenant, "I have, God knows! well considered of. Faults depend on each other, like the rings of a chain, brother, and woe be to him who touches

the

the first link. In the place of that mother, I should have said, Daughter, be patient, and suffer not injustice exercised towards you, to drive you into error. The mother, the daughter, the father, and the uncle, were all faulty. I am truly concerned that thy bad star should have mixed thy faults with theirs. I do not love games of chance, brother. The honest man ought to be humble and patient, for none but God can tell what may befall him on the morrow."

"Patience was never the foremost of my virtues," said the Collector, pressing his brother's hand; "but since I am become old, when I am afflicted, I learn to submit to the will of Providence. To return to my story.

"Antonia spoke with the most perfect tranquillity: as for me, I was any thing but tranquil; to say the truth, notwithstanding my love for Antonia, I foresaw that I was irrevocably given to her, and I hope, brother, you would not have approved that I should have abandoned her?"

"In the first interview I should have demanded, who are you? but had I omitted that question, I should have relied on the mercy of God, and taken the same part you did, my brother."

"I gave Antonia new assurances of my affection, and besought her to communinicate to me her plans for the future. "I am twenty years of age," she said. "We must yet pass five years in this retirement, or some other, before I am entitled by my father's will to take possession of my estates. We then shall return triumphantly to my native country."

"I would, Antonia, thou hadst no estates; that thou should'st seek no triumph, but that of having found a faithful heart. I look with dread on that epocha."

"You dread, perchance," she said, with some disdain, "the vengeance of my relations. Do you fear to appear before them?"

"My Antonia, I fear not the presence of any man, but in the triumph you anticipate,

cipate, I find something insulting. I would make you my bride in despight of your relations. I would tear you from them, were you in their power, and denied you to me; but have I not, my Antonia? What need have I of riches? I loved thee, I gave myself to thee, although I believed thee to be portionless. Must it be supposed in the world that I coveted thy wealth? Give me nothing but thyself. These arms will labour for thee, and if it be possible, I shall then love thee more than I love thee now. It is Antonia I desire to possess, and not her rich inheritance. What imports it to me the proud titles of thy family? Let us content ourselves with this house and this garden. What you give me here from your own hands, I accept willingly, but that which others must bestow on me, because I am united to thee, I will not accept. My happiness is inexpressible, place it not in danger."

"You believe that my relations would tear me from your arms?"

"Yes, I cannot doubt it," I said. "I pressed her to my bosom; I could no longer restrain my tears. Her pride was subdued by this language. "My beloved," she exclaimed, "you yielded every thing to me, I will yield to you. Let us be happy from this moment."

"My next demand was, that we might take measures for our immediate marriage; she replied, that would be difficult to accomplish, as no ecclesiastic would consent to unite us, when he should learn her real name, and that of her guardian. I could not bring her to decide on the means of overcoming that difficulty; she constantly replied to the most vehement of my arguments, "I will think of it." I had at length recourse to a little artifice. I represented how many happy moments we should lose in waiting five long years for her majority; and what painful embarrassments might result from the situation in which we stood to each other. My heart was warmed with the enthusiasm of love. I made an enchanting de-

scription

scription of the blissful results of our sacred union. I spoke in words of fire. I attained my end imperfectly, she partook my delirium. Brother, I was happy, but we did not marry.

"Again I pressed her to a legal union, and proposed several expedients which would render it easy of execution. She delayed it from day to day, sometimes under one pretext, sometimes under another. At length I had reason to be persuaded that a union like that in which we lived, had been also the aim of her romantic plans."

"What have you to desire?" she would say to me, "each time that I clasp you to my heart, am I not your wife? Is not our union sanctified by nature, by love the most ardent, by friendship the most faithful, and by confidence the most entire? Why do you seek the sanction of a ceremony that I cannot engage in, without uttering a falsehood, or by outraging the laws of my country, which command me to ask the consent of my guardian? Dost

thou fear the frailty of my heart, or of thine? Why else dost thou seek to bind the freedom of our love in the weighty chains of marriage? Let us give an example to the universe! Let us shew that voluntary faith is not a chimera!"

The Lieutenant tossed his head to and fro.

"I understand you, brother," said the Collector, "but you do not know with what facility one sometimes yields to the reasoning of her one loves—there were moments when I really thought there was something grand in the nature of our union."

"Hem!" said the Lieutenant. "Had she married you, she had been yours still. Marriage prevents little disagreements from being fostered to an irreparable quarrel. Without doubt a man can live with a woman without being married to her, as I believe is much the practice in Holland; but in marriage only is founded the happiness of man; and I consider it as a solemn act, by which each individual publicly

licly acknowledges, that he owes to his fellow-beings an account of his actions."

The Collector reflected an instant, and then said, "Brother, I do not know whence you draw your observations, but they always hit the nail on the head."

"Brother, it is from a modest heart," replied the Lieutenant, "dreading to do any thing which is forbidden even by man; for why, I say to myself, should they have forbidden this, if they had not just motives? But go on, brother."

"We continued to live thus, and I was the happiest of men. We made acquaintance with the noble owner of a neighbouring mansion. He was a young man of a prepossessing figure; and was passionately addicted to the chace. One day that we were together in his grounds, a hare passed us, and Antonia used a hunter's phrase. "What!" exclaimed he, "a huntress!" and smiling he presented her his gun. Another hare passed in a few moments, and Antonia laid it dead at her feet.

"The young man spoke with vehemence of

of the delights of the chace, and Antonia, with her usual sincerity, declared, that it was an exercise in which she had found great pleasure. We now entered into greater intimacy with the young nobleman. You know, brother, that I was not fond of any kind of hunting but that of deer, to which in our country we are most accustomed; nevertheless, to please Antonia, I sometimes accompanied them to the chace; but it only wearied me. Antonia perceived it, and sometimes, though rarely, she went alone. The young man soon felt a peculiar interest for the lovely huntress; he sought to prolong as much as possible the sports of the day, and Antonia returning home very late, would relate to me her great atchievements, while I rallied her on her taste for such amusements. At length I found it rather extraordinary, when Antonia remained all night at the chateau.—"I will accompany you in future," I said with a smile, "since you are so very fond of the chace."

"If I have displeased you, Rautenbach," she

she answered, "I will go no more. I cannot suffer you to hunt, because I know you extremely dislike the fatigue. Can it be that you distrust me?"

"Antonia, I am not capable of distrusting you, but it is the opinion of others, the censure of the world, to which I conjure you not to give scope."

"Dear Frederic, you do not think any one can censure my conduct?"

"What will they think, Antonia, if you accompany this young man incessantly to the chace; if you even pass the night in his mansion? Not to excite censure under such circumstances, you ought neither to be young nor handsome."

"Men," she said with a pensive air, "even the best of them, I perceive, can never forget that they are born to be our masters, and we their slaves."

"I shortly became convinced that the young nobleman loved Antonia; I named it to her, but she refused to believe it, and seriouly demanded if I were jealous?

"Yes, Antonia, I am jealous, but not

distrustful. I feelpain when another touches your hand, or only walks beside you."

"You are not jealous," she said, "but you are imperious; you do not love the chace, you hate society, and you would that I should have no inclinations but yours."

"How could I reply? I endeavoured to follow her inclinations; I mixed oftener with the parties the nobleman invited to his house, among whom Antonia delighted to be included. The greater part of these persons had received but an indifferent education, and were shallow and conceited, yet Antonia took the greatest pleasure in listening to their foolish conversations, and made use of all her wit, at one time to flatter, at another to humiliate them.

"We lived thus a year, and notwithstanding these light clouds, they were halcyon days, for Antonia loved me sincerely.

"At length I began to perceive, brother, (and I cannot think of it even now

with

with composure) that when any mention was made of a deceived husband, every one looked at me, and then exchanged significant glances with the surrounding persons. My domestics slackened in their respect toward me, and I chanced to hear them one day speaking together of what they termed *my shame.* You know my temper, brother; judge how I must have loved Antonia to have supported this.

"I was soon obliged to come to a determination, two young officers who were visitors to the nobleman having dared to make me the subject of their mockery. On the morning following this disagreeable scene, Antonia entered my chamber in a most seducing dishabille; she sung a tender air to the accompaniment of her guitar; tears flowed down her cheeks, as she clasped me in her arms, and said, "I am about to become a mother: I shall give to my husband the most precious pledge of love." I partook her transports. It was a moment of exquisite felicity: alas! it was the last.

"Exact of me," she exclaimed, "a sacrifice: be it what it may, the mother of thy child performs it."

"Antonia," I replied with confidence, "forbear to see that man!" She let fall her arms that had till then encircled me, and fixing her eyes upon me, after a long pause, and in a tone of sorrow, she pronounced, "Frederic! is it thou who at such a moment canst thus speak to me! Is this the recompence of my love! Oh! my mother!" She extended her uplifted hands towards Heaven.

"Antonia," I cried, "my beloved Antonia! for thy sake I can endure contempt and raillery, but I cannot support the idea that my wife should be called a dishonoured woman." She again turned her eyes on me, her countenance expressed a mixture of anger and grief—"Have you any other command to lay upon me?" she asked me coldly.

"No, Antonia, but you ought to break with that man, for the mother of my child must

must not give calumny a triumph." She replied, "I shall obey."

"From that time she refused to accept his invitations, and remained in her chamber whenever he presented himself at our house. She never beheld him again, but there also took place an extraordinary change in her conduct towards me. Sometimes she displayed an exquisite and melting tenderness; at others, the extreme of coldness. At times she appeared overwhelmed with profound melancholy, which in vain I sought to console or enliven. If I spoke of our former happiness, with tears she would beseech me to spare her.

"One morning she appeared in the same dress she had worn the first time I beheld her. It was her custom to put it on when we celebrated any of our domestic fêtes; such as my birth day. She embraced me and said, "Frederic, let us be happy today: let us suppose it the day when we met beside the Russian balance." I fell on my knees before her; I assured her of the most ardent love, I implored her to conquer

quer her dejection. "I will endeavour," she said, embracing me anew. She never quitted me during the whole of that day. I could not help remarking something extraordinary in her manner: a vehement display of affection, and sudden starts of anguish, which she could not wholly conceal. She called it the day of renewed tenderness; in the evening she retired to her chamber, and sung an air of plaintive, touching melancholy.

"The next morning, as she did not ap pear at her accustomed hour, the servant whom I questioned, replied she had gone out very early to the garden to gather flowers. Another hour passed, and she did not return: I became uneasy, and went out to seek her. My search was vain. Towards the evening a little girl, of whom Antonia was very fond, brought me a letter without an address. I demanded from whence it came? she said Madame had given it her late on the preceding day, with a strict charge not to deliver it to me till the following evening. I tore the

the letter open—Here it is, my brother." The Collector drew the letter from his pocket, and with much emotion read as follows:

"My happiness is gone, Frederic! for ever gone! I have obeyed thy command, and have never beheld the man who has caused our misunderstanding. Oh! well didst thou know, Frederic, that my heart was thine; but love did not suffice thee! Thou hast exacted obedience: I can be a lover, but I cannot be a slave. I have no choice left. I will never see thee more! The sight of my master rent my heart, it would have annihilated my love. My love I cannot part with; it is all that remains to me of my former happiness. I hate all men that would bind me in fetters, but I would not hate thee. Wherever I dwell there would I cherish thy remembrance, but never can I behold thee more. Adieu, Frederic! adieu! I have been perfectly happy during a whole year, and that is more than I dared to expect with a heart so difficult to be satisfied as mine. Be

happy,

happy, Frederic! Find a heart less susceptible, less tempestuous than mine; and be happy. Farewell! I shall love you until my latest sigh."

When the Collector ended the letter, he rose and paced the room for some time, buried in thought. The Lieutenant kept his eyes fixed on the ground.

"I never saw her more, brother," said the Collector in broken accents; "no where could I find her. She had secured to me, previous to her departure, all that she left behind her, which was a very considerable property. I sold every thing, looking on the money as a sacred deposit which remained untouched. Five years afterwards I visited her native country, where I learned she had married a French officer, and that attaining her majority, she had taken possession of her estates.—She was then in Italy they said, but I could not be informed of the exact place of her residence.

"The wounds of my heart were at length cicatrised. Eighteen years more

elapsed,

elapsed, when chancing to pass through the city of ——, I heard Antonia was its inhabitant. A trembling emotion seized upon me when they pronounced her name.—She had four children by her husband, a French colonel. As soon as I became assured I was not deceived in the person, I wrote to her, and prayed her to give me some tidings of my child. This was her answer:

"Rautenbach, comest thou as an avenging spirit? What ought I, what can I say to thee! I love thee: I never loved but thee, and for thy sake I have cherished the fault and the repentance. Yes, thou too didst love, didst love me; but I repulsed thy heart in the vain pride of mine. I am punished. Oh! seek me not! Fly me! The child, of whose fate thou wouldst be informed, is a daughter, and is called Frederica. Hallowed name! What remembrances it brings! Ask nothing further. Be thou free from the torments of a love which my flight only rendered a crime.

Fly! in mercy fly! and forget the unfortunate Antonia!!"

"Imagine, brother, how much suffering this letter cost me. I enquired particularly into her situation, and found she was not happy with her husband. He was an extravagant, dissipated man, and she had a difficulty to insure a provision for her children out of the wreck of her fortune. I had still with me the untouched produce of the sale of the house near Turin; I enclosed it in a blank cover to Antonia, merely writing on the outside, *for Frederica*, and immediately quitted the city, difficult as it was to fly my unfortunate and still beloved Antonia, without seeing her. Had I entertained the least hope of being serviceable to her, I had remained there, but I knew her character too well to expect she would have permitted me to serve her. She had committed a fault, brother, but she was stil virtuous."

"There is somewhat grand in her conduct," said the Lieutenant; "neverthe-

less, my dear brother, we ought always to be guided by a humble heart. She would brave destiny, and obtain a species of unalloyed happiness that is not perhaps to be found on the earth. God preserve me from condemning her; has he not judged her himself? She had a strong mind. God grant her humility and patience! perhaps, however, she has discovered her errors."

"She has, brother. Here is the letter I received yesterday. Read it, brother, while I seek to compose my agitated heart, and who knows, according to the event that letter traces, but from the blossoms of my youth may spring a fruit that will refresh my grey hairs." He quitted the apartment.

The Lieutenant took the letter; at first he dared not look upon it—at length he read:

"On the verge of the tomb, my only friend, my trembling hand takes again the pen, and my heart retraces the happiest year of my past life. Thou wouldst have cherished me! thou wouldst never

have abandoned me, and I tore myself from thy protecting arms. I have been cruelly punished, and I descend, alone, without one consoling voice to chear me, to the dark bosom of the tomb.—Alone! although my couch is surrounded by four children. They understand not the heart that delivered itself to a single fault, and in its latest moment, is still the temple of love.

"Yet tears will be shed on my grave. Thy eyes, Frederic, are filled with tears! Become the inheritor of all that is most dear to me in the world, thy grand-daughter and mine. Thy child thou didst never know, I wished to spare thee all sorrows, after those my pride inflicted on thee. My daughter imitated the fault of her mother; she died in giving birth to her only child, *our* grandchild.—I had little intercourse with my daughter, but this child has been ever with me, and of trifling import was it, if my tenderness betrayed how nearly she belonged to me. How many times have I held her to my heart! how

how often have I bedewed her face with the tears of grief and love! I have imagined I recognized in her, traits of thee; and I have fixed my eyes on her till sight was dimmed with tears. Oh! that she may recall to thee one trait of Antonia! one single trait that may cause joy to spring up in thy heart. She is called Antonia, after her whom thou wilt never more behold. She is poor and must depend on thee. My children view her askance with the eye of jealousy. Thou wilt receive her with the embrace of affection.

"She departs to-morrow, bringing nothing but a few vestments. My pride in her, would not suffer me to bestow that on her which my children would hereafter say she had robbed them of.

"Antonia will present thee with thy portrait, which till this hour has never left my bosom. Dear Rautenbach! receive thy child, all that remains of thy Antonia, of thy long cherished love. She knows not to whom she is confided. I

have

have told her nothing, I leave it all to thy judgment.

"Scarcely remains to me the strength to grasp the pen. Yet a few hours!—this letter will not be sent till I am dead. To-morrow, or the morrow of that to-morrow!

* * * * * * * * * * * *

"I have taken my last leave of Antonia. I could not preserve my silence. I held her to my expiring heart, and said, thy mother was my child!

"May the blessing of heaven guard Antonia! and may my spirit, released from its earthly prison, behold her sheltered in thy arms. She will arrive four days after the receipt of this letter.

"Antonia has quitted the house. Behold me now alone .Behold me dying! Frederic! I once was happy! bless thy Antonia!"

CHAPTER XVII.

THE ARRIVAL OF ANTONIA.

THE Lieutenant, still weeping, held the letter in his hand, when the Collector returned to the parlour. "Ah, my brother! I see you have wept for the unfortunate being who could find repose no where but in the grave. I have blessed her. But one thing perplexes me, brother; I have a good wife, who, I confess with gratitude, has shewn me more condescension than ever Antonia would have done. How will she receive this proof of my passion for another?"

"Hum! you must expect she will blame you. Your wife is an honourable woman, such a woman as Solomon has described; one who loves thee, who will never forsake thee, and who looks on all thy qualities as virtues."

"Yes, brother; but advise me what to do. Something must be resolved on.

Antonia

Antonia will come, and what must my wife think then? yet, brother, this child! I must receive her as my grand-daughter. She shall know to whom she belongs. She shall know, brother.—A universal trembling seizes me. Good God! my grand-daughter! and I know nothing of her, but that she is called Antonia. If I only knew her age, brother—"

The Lieutenant appeared embarrassed—"It is very difficult; if it pleases you, brother, you may call her my daughter. I will love her as a father. Such an adventure is difficult to explain even to the best of wives."

"Brother, I will tell her of it, let what will happen: my wife is very reasonable; she proved that on the arrival of William. It is true there is some difference; you are not her husband."

The door opened, and Madame Rautenbach entered, leading in a young Lady, about fifteen. "This young lady enquires for you, dear husband." The Collector turned pale; he stood still a moment, then

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the tears gushing from his eyes, he threw his arms round her and cried aloud, "Antonia, dear child, God bless thee! thou art mine! I am thy grandfather, the father of thy mother—yes! yes! thou art mine!"

The Lieutenant, with tears in his eyes, first approached the Collector; then turning to Madame Rautenbach, who was confounded by this scene, went up to Antonia, and pressed her trembling hand in his. At length he exclaimed, "Brother, I know not what counsel to give you!"

The Collector led Antonia to his wife; "My child, behold thy mother!" Antonia, in amazement at this singular reception, knelt silently before Madame Rautenbach, who looked alternately on the young girl, on her husband, and the Lieutenant. "Yes," said she, "I see how it is. I did believe it was all at an end." A cloud of dissatisfaction passed over her brow; but resuming a kind tone, she said, "It is impossible; yet I will be convinced:" and she hastily left the room.

The Collector looked at the Lieutenant, both kept silent, and Antonia shed tears.

Madame Rautenbach returned with a portrait in her hand. "My God!" she cried, "what a resemblance; is not this a daughter of Antonia? at first I believed it was herself. You have also named her Antonia."

"You know then dear wife——"

"Another time, my friend, guard your secrets better. I found this portrait in the first year of our marriage. I was then a little intriguing, and if this angel had come at that epocha——But," she continued," turning suddenly to Antonia, "you cannot be more than 15 or 16 years old. Oh God! can it be possible she is thy daughter?"

"No, my grand-daughter. Her mother was my daughter."

"Her mother! yes, that maybe." She looked at the date on the back of the picture, forty years since. "How old were you when you received this picture?"

"Twenty-

"Twenty-three. But when did you find it?"

"The first year of our marriage, while you were on a journey, I saw it in a secret drawer you had left half open, and with it a number of letters from Antonia. I perceived they were not recent, and I kept silence; yet I longed to know who this Antonia was, and I shewed the portrait to your sister; she had already seen it in your secretary."

"God be praised I fell into good hands."

"Your sister," continued Madame Rautenbach, "told me it was the portrait of your first love, but no one knew her name, nor her rank, for she had lived near Turin. At Turin, thought I; I see I have no cause of alarm."

The Collector presented to his wife the last letter of Antonia; she read it with great emotion. She then tenderly embraced the young Antonia: calling her most affectionately her daughter. She addressed different questions to her, and Antonia replied to them with simplicity

and judgment. Madame Rautenbach withdrew, and left her with the brothers.

The Lieutenant pressed Antonia to his heart: he too called her his daughter, and promised her the affection of a parent.

"Such was my Antonia!" said the Collector, drawing his brother to the window, "only her air was more noble, there was more fire in her fine eyes, more expression in her features."

"I suppose so; but this Antonia, with her modest and candid air, will please me better." The Collector again gave her his benediction, and related to her the history of her birth. She drew the portrait consigned to her by her dying grandmother, from her bosom, avowing with emotion, that the last words of that parent had caused her to suspect the relation in which she stood to M. Rautenbach. The Lieutenant took the portrait. "Ah!" said he, "you were thus in your youth; here is your assured look, your elevated physiognomy."

William came to demand Antonia on

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the part of Madame Rautenbach. He gazed with admiration on the young stranger. The Collector said, "Thy sister!" then turning hastily to the Lieutenant, held out his hand, and said with a lively air, "My brother, it is a bargain?" The Lieutenant placed his hand in the Collector's, replying, "God inspired you with that thought." "My sister," said William, blushing.

"Yes, or no, as fate wills," answered the Collector. "Brother, fortune smiles at last. Go, find your mother, my children." They withdrew together.

"All that remains of the history of my youth, is Antonia in the tomb, and this dear child, whom I have never till now known. Tears of joy and sorrow are ready to escape together from my eyes. When this child is before me, it seems as if Antonia had quitted me but yesterday, and had come again to seek me to-day. I forget then my grey hairs. But did you observe, brother, that William changed colour when we called her his sister? I

must

must confess he is become an excellent creature. We ought to thank God on his behalf, for what have we done for him? I taught him mathematics, and my wife (though there is not a better woman in the world) has stuffed his head with the most singular notions; and you, brother, have made him affectionate by your sweetness; but that is all, and yet what have we now? a young man, virtuous, and well instructed."

"Perhaps, Frederic, we see him with a partial eye. Judge not too hastily, for the future."

"Brother, I will be proud, 'tis an enjoyment that I have known so rarely, 'tis a sentiment that elevates my head and my heart. This young man is above all others of his age; and we have an Antonia, as lovely as the first, as noble, and, as you just now observed, brother, with a humble heart, an ingenuous mind. These children are ours. And picture to yourself, brother, these children at the altar of hymen. What a happy moment! (Madame Rau-

tenbach

tenbach entered the room) Let us thank God, dear wife, that we are at length happy parents; you, my brother, and myself: we shall behold around our beds of death, those who will bedew our coffins with their tears!"

"One thing grieves me," said Madame Rautenbach, "which I could not speak of before that dear girl; it is, that children have only come under our roof in a manner not quite natural."

"Well, what matter how they come, if God gives us the power to make them happy?"

"I should have preferred," said Madame Rautenbach, "having given birth to them both. But the will of heaven be done."

"My dear wife, if William and Antonia should ever be united!"—

"God give them his blessing," said Madame Rautenbach: "I shall go with joy to their wedding."

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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